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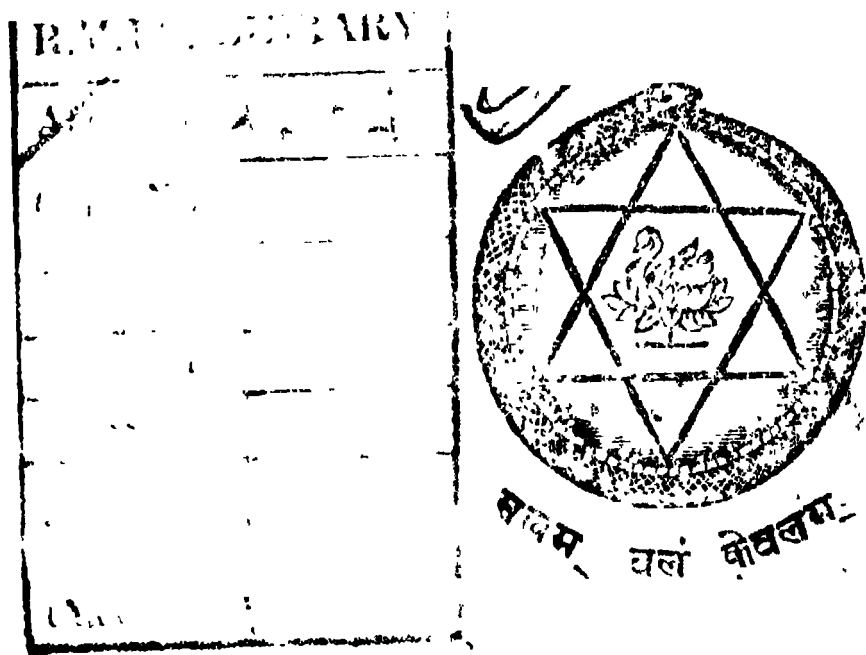


# The Pilgrim

Vol. 2 1912







# THE PILGRIM.

Vol 2

## SAINT IGNATIUS AND HIS COMPANY.

*(Continued from Vol. II., p. 221).*

Now what was the secret of the Spiritual Exercises and their extraordinary power over nearly everybody who was once induced to undergo them? Taking up the little book to-day, our first feeling is one of disappointment and puzzlement; the instructions appear so simple, and indeed so crude in their theological form, that we are tempted to say there is nothing in them,—or at least nothing for us. We no longer fear either the God or the devil of the mediæval church. If we recognise any such powers to-day, our difficulty is to decide which is God and which is devil. In fact, there is nothing in the Exercises as they stand. They are the bare frame-work of a system of discipline which depends for its success—like all spiritual disciplines—upon the skill of the master and the aptness of the pupil. The master may not be visible in the flesh; the pupil may not be a Christian. The system may be applied to any religion which aims at the subordination of the personal will to a

larger purpose and a larger life. If I were to describe it in a single phrase, I should call it 'the imaginative way in meditation.' It uses the imagination and the senses for the training of the emotions and the will. But it is above all a practical method; each step of the way has its definite purpose, its place in the scheme.

We begin at the very beginning; we go back to the dawn of the religious consciousness in man. The first exercise is a meditation on Sin. Now Sin is the realisation of a separate personal will in man, and a power of choice between different actions. When the will of man is just sufficiently free to make choice possible—in other words, when the human mind has reached the point of being able to reflect upon action—then sin is possible; and by sin I mean the great cleavage between the separated self and the united Self. The original sin in this view is the sin of the angels, the sin of pride, the setting up of the separated self; and the sin of our first parents was the desire of knowledge for its own sake, the eating of the fruit of the tree which would make man 'cunning' indeed in the sense of knowing facts, but not truly wise in the sense of knowing values. Saturn and Mercury therefore are the planets concerned with original sin; for all sin can be reduced to terms of *mind*.

In the second exercise we make a direct attack upon the sin of pride, by recalling our own particular sins, and contemplating all the rest of God's creatures "with wonder and affection." I want you to notice particularly those two words, *wonder* and *affection*. When we can get back to the spirit of wonder at the world, then indeed we are converted and become as little children; for the wonder-spirit is the child-spirit; it is at the very opposite pole from spiritual pride. Wonder opens the doors of the prison-house and makes a way for angels to pass up and down. And the next step is affection. "He prayeth best who loveth best, all

things both great and small." The path of Return—the way back from separateness to union—is the path of Love.

In the third exercise we attack the question of knowledge—the knowledge of good and evil; and we pray, boldly and definitely, for a knowledge of the world, in order that we may come to a right judgment of the values of visible and invisible things.

I shall not attempt to go through the exercises in detail, but I will make just a few quotations to show how they are built up, and how the imagination is used to bring the subject-matter home to the postulant.

The instructions for the second week of the discipline begin as follows:—

"The first day and the first contemplation is upon the Incarnation. It contains a preparatory prayer, three preludes, and three points, and a colloquy.

The preparatory prayer is to ask our Lord God for grace that all my intentions, actions, and operations may be ordained purely to the service and praise of His Divine Majesty.

The first prelude is to call to mind the history of the matter which I have to contemplate; which is here how the Three Divine Persons beheld all the surface and circuit of the terrestrial globe, covered with men. And how, seeing all men descending into Hell, They determined in Their Eternity, that the Second Person should become man to save the human race, and thus, when the fulness of time had come, They sent the Angel Gabriel to Our Lady.

The second prelude will be a composition of place, seeing the spot; here it will be to see the whole space and circuit of the terrestrial globe, in which so many divers races dwell: then likewise to behold in particular the house and chamber of Our Lady in the town of Nazareth in the province of Galilee.

The third is to ask for what I want; it will here be to ask for an interior knowledge of Our Lord, Who for me is made man, that I may the more love Him and follow Him."

Then come the three "points" of the Exercise; the first is to see with the mind's eye all the persons concerned in the history, the people on the earth, and the Three Divine Persons in heaven, and lastly Our Lady and the Angel saluting her; the second is to hear what the people are saying, to imagine the various conversations of earth, then the discourse of the Holy Trinity, and finally the dialogue

between the Angel and Our Lady ; and the third is to consider what the people are doing, to picture to ourselves the activities of the human race, the intervention of the Three Divine Persons, and the obedience of Our Lady and the Angel in carrying out Their Will.

“At the end a colloquy is to be made, thinking, what I ought to say to the Three Divine Persons, or to the Eternal Word Incarnate, or to His Mother and Our Lady, making petition according to what each feels in himself, in order to follow and imitate better Our Lord, thus newly become incarnate, and then say a *Pater Noster*.”

Together with these meditations are given various instructions for the discipline of the body and for fasting, *etc.*, and we are reminded that, although we sometimes omit to do penances “out of a sensual love and a false judgment that the human body cannot bear it, yet on the contrary we sometimes do too much penance, thinking that the body can sustain it.”

As we pass over the different stages in the life of Ignatius, we are struck with his teachableness in things like these. In his youth he had gone to the extremes of fasting and bodily penances ; but when he came to rule others, he guarded them most carefully from the unwise excesses under which he had suffered himself. Listen to the sound commonsense of this letter to his beloved pupil and successor Francis Borgia :—

“As to fasting and abstinence, I think it more to the glory of God to preserve and strengthen the digestion and the natural powers than to weaken them. I desire you to consider that as soul and body are given you by God, your Creator and Maker, you will have to give account of both ; and for His sake you should not weaken your bodily nature, because the spiritual could not then act with the same energy. I advise you rather to eat of all permitted food, and as often as you are hungry, giving no offence to your neighbour ; for we ought to love the body and wish it well when it obeys and assists the soul ; and thus the soul has more strength and energy to serve and glorify our Creator and Master.”

In his own community at Rome Ignatius always gave particular care to the sick ; often sitting up with them at

night, and even selling the furniture of the house, in times of poverty, to provide comforts and remedies. The soldier in the field must be reckless of life and limb; but the soldier in camp must be well cared for, if he is to fight again to-morrow.

But the picture I have drawn for you of Saint Ignatius is very far from complete. I have given you, perhaps, the impression of a personality at once brilliant and desperate, sagacious and austere. I have said little of his tenderness, because he himself hid it so scrupulously even from those who lived most intimately beside him. He destroyed with his own hand all those notes and diaries in which he wrote down the details of his spiritual experience—all except one scrap of paper, preserved to us by accident, and containing an account of his emotions during Mass, which might well stand beside that incomparable chapter in the *Little Flowers of St. Francis* which describes the ecstacy of Brother John of Alvernia, when, in the midst of the ceremony of consecration, “there was given unto him an unspeakable feeling of God, such as he himself knew not of, nor could thereafter tell forth with his tongue,” so that “he could scarce endure such utter sweetness,” and “his heart was melted as wax before the fire.” The experience of Ignatius, referred to in the rescued fragment of the diary, is set down in brief and restrained words, obviously intended for no eye but his own, and it is the sole personal record that has come down to us. But we are told one little biographical detail which throws a flood of light upon the inner side of that so strenuous and soldierly life; when he was quite an old man, his superiors decided to release him from the obligation of saying his office every day, because they feared that he would positively injure his eyes by so much weeping; he was never able to get through it without tears. There you have the tenderness and humility of the devotee to set over against the brilliance and audacity

of the missionary, the sternness of the disciplinarian, the resourcefulness of the organiser of men. Yet I think the story which above all others shows his greatness of soul is that of his answer to his confessor, when he was asked what he would do if it were revealed to him that all his life's work was to be brought to naught ; that the Company of Jesus was to be broken up and fail of its purpose—supposing it was not God's will that it should succeed. He did not reply, as I fancy most founders would, "My work is God's work, therefore it *must* succeed." Neither did he say, "I am not concerned with success ; I can only do my work and leave it in God's hands." He answered the question simply and humanly. "I think," he said, "that after the first half-hour I could submit." There spoke the man who knew himself, and had learned to take his own measure. He knew what that first half-hour would cost him. And in that knowledge I think he fulfils the definition of Wordsworth :—

" True dignity abides with him alone  
Who, in the silent hour of inward thought,  
Can still suspect and still revere himself,  
In lowliness of heart."

Such was the Jesuit discipline at its source ; a system of self-abnegation so complete that the pupil did not confuse his own personal plans with the Divine Will, or identify their fulfilment with the salvation of the world. I am very far from saying that the Jesuits as a body have gained that height of self-knowledge and self-mastery. But when we speak as we shall have to speak of their latter-day arrogance and exclusiveness, their departure in a hundred ways from the spirit of their founder, let us remember that Ignatius himself was willing to face the possibility that the Company of Jesus after all *might* not be the one pet scheme of the Heavenly Powers.

When the magnetic personality of Ignatius was removed,

the government of the Order fell into the hands of his immediate followers ; men who had lived with him, travelled with him, endured hardship and persecution with him, worked under his eye, and imbibed at all points the spirit of their master. His first successor in the generalship after his death was his pupil and intimate friend Francis Borgia, the Duke of Gandia ; like himself, an aristocrat and a man of affairs ; a man trained and experienced in dealing with men. In the hands of such leaders and with the living tradition of a great personality still dominant, the sanity and integrity of the Order were secure. Within a hundred years of its foundation the Company of Jesus had produced its finest flowers of spiritual chivalry ; the virtues at which it aimed were built into the very bones of Europe. If you want to see the Jesuit discipline at its very best, if you want to know what it could and did achieve in human character and action, read—or read again—an old-fashioned book, which I suppose most of you have read at some time or other, *John Inglesant*, by John Henry Shorthouse. There you have, in my opinion, the most perfect picture yet given us of the Jesuit ideal as St. Ignatius himself conceived it ; and a noble ideal it was in its own field. In so far as it is possible to sum it up in a few words, it is summed up in the speech of Father St. Clare to John Inglesant at the outset of his political career :—

“You are now,” said the Jesuit, “embracing the cause full of enthusiasm and zeal, and this is very well ; how else could we run out the race unless we began with some little fire ? But this will not last, and unless you are warned, you may be offended and fall away. When you have lived longer in this world, and outlived the enthusiastic and pleasing illusions of youth, you will find your love and pity for the race increase tenfold, your admiration and attachment to any particular party or opinion fall away altogether. You will not find the royal cause perfect any more than any other, nor those embarked in it free from mean and sordid motives, though you think now that all of them act from the noblest. This is the most important lesson that a man can learn—that all men are really alike ; that all creeds and opinions are nothing but the result of chance and temperament ; that no party is on the whole better than another ; that no creed does more than shadow forth imperfectly one side of truth ; and it is only when you begin to see



this that you can feel that pity for mankind, that sympathy with its disappointments and follies, and its natural human hopes, which have such a little time of growth, and such a sure season of decay. Nothing but the Infinite pity is sufficient for the infinite pathos of human life.

As you know, we have many parties in our Church, nay, in our own Order ; but it is no matter, they are all alike. Hereafter it will be of little importance which of these new names, Cavalier or Roundhead, you are called by, whether you turn Papist or Puritan, Jesuit or Jansenist ; but it will matter very much whether you acted as became a man, and did not flinch ignobly at the moment of trial.....for be certain of this, that no misery can be equal to that which a man feels who is conscious that he has proved unequal to his part, who has deserted the post his captain set him, and who, when men said 'such and such a one is there on guard, there is no need to take further heed,' has left his watch or quailed before the foeman, to the loss, perhaps the total ruin, of the cause he had made his choice. I pray God that such misery as this may never be yours."

And if it be thought that this view tends to intellectual laxity, that it permits indifference to principle and to truth, take by contrast that later passage where the priests and cardinals at their dinner-table are discussing the philosophy of the Renaissance, the doctrine that there is no real difference between good and evil :—

"In the worship of Priapus nothing comes amiss or is to be staggered at, however voluptuous or sensual, for all things are but varied manifestations of life."

Inglesant filled his glass, and drank it off before he replied. His eyes were fixed upon the deep-coloured wine as though he saw there, as in a magic goblet, the opposing powers that divide the world. It seemed to him, that he had renounced his right to join in the conflict, and that he must remain as ever a mere spectator of the result ; nevertheless he said :—

'Your doctrine is delightful to the philosopher and to the man of culture, who has his nature under the curb, and his glance firmly fixed upon the goal ; but to the vulgar it is death ; nay indeed, it was death until the voice of another God was heard, and the form of another God was seen, not in vineyards and rosy bowers, but in deserts and stony places, in dens and caves of the earth, and in prisons and on crosses of wood.'

But no single ideal, no particular set of virtues, will suffice for the whole development of human character ; and when it came to the third or fourth generation after Ignatius, the limitations and dangers of the Jesuit system began to appear. Ignatius had gathered round him men of strong and diverse individuality, whom his rare insight had selected one

by one. And the power to pick your recruits is no less important than the power to train them. Most of us have noticed in the societies of the present day how the original founder or nucleus of the groups is a great personality who attracts to himself or herself a few strong and distinct personalities of many types. Then comes the second-rate leader and gathers in a swarm of second-rate people. And one of the clearest marks of second-rate people is that they are the servants of their system and not the masters of it. The great man can always keep his method elastic, and adapt it to the circumstances of the hour. Ignatius himself was no fanatic, but his method, in the hands of smaller men, attracted and fostered the very qualities on which fanaticism feeds. The Company of Jesus was from the first an aggressive and proselytising body, aiming at power over men. And we know how few people can be trusted with power ; least of all, the self-sacrificing people, who, because they are so unsparing of themselves, are apt to be so ruthless in their sacrifice of others.

Those of you who are familiar with Theosophical teachings must have noticed, long before I had got very far with my lecture, that I was dealing with a particular virtue or group of virtues which have been extolled in those teachings to an extent which I venture to think a little disproportionate to their final value. It is natural, perhaps, that this should have been done, because Theosophy has concerned itself chiefly with that great crisis in spiritual evolution which is called "Initiation," or "setting foot upon the Path"—the Path being the way of return for the soul "into the bosom of the Father," after the downward arc of descent into matter is complete. In astrological parlance, Theosophy has always tended to exalt the virtues associated with the sign Libra, the seventh sign of the zodiac, which is generally taken to represent that turning-point in evolution at which the separated self seeks no longer its personal development, but begins to

seek union, harmony, service, corporate life. I would not press this interpretation upon any to whom the astrological symbolism does not appeal ; but those of you who are practical astrologers will readily follow me when I suggest that the Company of Jesus affords the most complete embodiment of the virtues associated with the sign Libra which has yet been seen in the Western world. I say advisedly in the West because the East has given us the supreme example of those virtues in the temperament and in the religion of Japan. Heroic self-sacrifice, unquestioning obedience, complete subordination of the personal self to the service of the community,—these are the ideals of *Bushido*—the way of the warrior ; and we have seen them carried out, in this year of grace, to the point of martyrdom by some of the noblest of the Japanese nation. One need not be an astrologer in order to perceive the close parallel between the religious aristocracy of Japan and that of the Company of Jesus. The system of *ju-jitsu*—what is it but the training of the wrestler, as Ignatius trained his wrestlers, to “overcome by yielding.” The Jesuits in the 16th century were the masters of spiritual *ju-jitsu* in the West. The discipline, alike in Japan and in Europe, has never been that of a Puritanical asceticism, but the discipline of an artist, who raises life itself to the level of fine art. No true artist ever despises worldly goods or worldly skill ; no true artist loves poverty, though he may love art so well as to endure poverty cheerfully for the sake of it. I need not remind astrologers that Libra is one of the two signs of the zodiac chiefly concerned with art,—Taurus with the art that appeals to the ear, Libra with the art that appeals to the eye. Nor need I point out to those who have made any study of individual temperament in the light of astrology how admirably the Libran temperament is suited to the Jesuit discipline and the Jesuit ideal. Of course I am not suggesting that the sign Libra is dominant in the horoscope of every individual Jesuit.

St. Ignatius himself to the best of my belief was born in the last decanate of Virgo ; his sun was in Capricorn, as I have already said. I merely take the Jesuits as a body to be under the influence of Libra, just as we say that a particular country is under a given sign, as Japan is said to be under Libra, because the dominant characteristics of its people as a whole are the same characteristics that strike us in the individual person born under that sign. We know, for instance, how much those born under Libra are apt to suffer from 'scruples.' Their minds are so delicately poised and balanced that the least breath will throw them 'out,' as we say, and make them dip from side to side till time and patience bring them to the level. There you have the whole history of casuistry in a nutshell. 'Scrupulosity,' as it is called, is a well recognised disease of novices—a sort of measles of our spiritual childhood, belonging naturally to the first steps on the Path. It is a paralysis of the will caused by mental indecision ; the will cannot act because the mind cannot decide. There is a chapter in the Exercises devoted to this trouble ; and Ignatius himself seems to have had a 'short way' with scruples, as in the case of the man who could not decide how much time he ought to spend over the various parts of his daily devotions ; Ignatius told him to take one hour for the whole business and simply leave out whatever he could not do in that hour. Persons of such a temperament often need but one steadying touch to bring them to a decision, and when their decision is once made they rarely go back on it.

Again, it is under the influence of Libra that the arts of politeness and flattery are brought to their highest perfection. This is true of the individual born under Libra, and it is true of the nation—Japan. That these are not the virtues of an effeminate race, Japan has amply shown us. Once trained and disciplined, Libra becomes the velvet glove for the iron hand of Capricorn. No other sign can yield such unquestioning

obedience, such utter self-abandonment, such outward sweetness and tractability, combined with such complete inner detachment and suspense of judgment. No other temperament can be so entirely a tool moved at another's bidding ; a perfect instrument in the hands of a player. When the player is a master or a saint, it is well. But the peculiar danger of the Libran temperament is its liability to be dominated by another personality stronger but no wiser than itself. Obedience is only a virtue when it is yielded to a superior. The difficulty with every religious organisation is to secure that the teachers and governors are *really* superior to those over whom they are set to rule.

I have taken the Society of Jesus—to give it its modern name—as the supreme illustration of what the discipline of self-sacrifice will lead to when logically carried out. Time would fail me even to outline the history of the Jesuit Order, or to show you in detail what was the result upon the pupil when his nominal superiors were no longer genuine superiors, as at first they undoubtedly were. But to those of you who want to see the obverse side of the medal I would warmly commend a book published about a year ago, entitled *Fourteen Years a Jesuit*, by Count Paul von Hoensbroech, who as you will guess spent the best years of his early manhood within the Jesuit fold, and at last came out of it to write the most complete and authoritative indictment of the Jesuit system that has yet been given to the world. And Count von Hoensbroech does not write as an enemy—he writes as an honourable, scrupulously fair, but deeply disappointed friend. He writes as a man of genuine culture and fine sensibility—‘a scholar and a gentleman,’ to use the old-fashioned phrase ; and he writes with true German thoroughness, giving chapter and verse for everything he says. The book makes two bulky volumes, but every page is fascinating to the student of human nature and religious history. He shows us with ad-

mirable clearness what this breaking-up of the personal will involves in the character of the average pupil. He tells us of the life of the young novice—the gradual weaning from all personal affections, the rigid rule against ‘particular friendships,’ the suppression of all enquiry and initiative, the slow destruction of all judgment, all self-reliance, all independence of thought and action. He tells of the educational system—the resolute exclusion of all knowledge which cannot be made to fit in with the doctrines of the church, the preference always given to Jesuit writers on all subjects, even those with which they are obviously unfitted to deal, the unremitting glorification of Jesuit heroes and Jesuit saints above all other saints and heroes of history, the systematic disparagement of all forms of beauty and goodness outside the Jesuit ideal. Such was not the training of the Companions of Ignatius, thrown as they were into situations of real danger, demanding the utmost resourcefulness and originality, the readiest invention and wit. It is true that the mutual renunciation of personal power has resulted in a corporate power which, until recent times, continued to be felt throughout Europe ; but when the guiding intelligence has vanished from the body, the power is blind.

Of course it is easy to see that Count von Hoensbroech is one of the last men in the world who should ever have tried to be a Jesuit, for he was born with the sun in the sign Cancer ; and the religious life of such persons is inspired and fed by family affections, domestic ties, and the sentiments of patriotism and loyalty to their home, their country, or their clan. But the young Jesuit must recognise no kindred and no fatherland. He is to be a cosmopolitan, preferring no one country above another ; he is to renounce and ignore all personal attachments—even a letter from his mother will often be burned unread. To impose such a discipline upon a man born with the sun in Cancer is to cut him off from the very

springs of piety. It is as stupid as it is cruel. Ignatius would not have made that blunder. We may be sure that the founders of the Company of Jesus had access to those unwritten sciences which are almost lost to our materialistic age. You will remember how, in the story of John Inglesant, his brother Eustace produces a horoscope and submits it to John for his opinion, and the young Jesuit in his criticism and discussion of it shows himself a much more capable astrologer than the professor from whom it was obtained. The more instructed among them knew well enough that the Jesuit discipline, to achieve success, required a particular temperament to work on, though it must be a temperament yielding great range and variety of gifts, as the Libra temperament does. Our mistake in these latter days is to regard self-sacrifice and the renunciation of the personal will as the supreme achievement of virtue, the final step of attainment, instead of being only the first step on the Path—the beginning of the return, but not the goal.

When the detachment of the Ego from the personal will is achieved, the individual has to learn those larger virtues which fit him for the citizenship of the world. He is assumed to have developed already the virtues of the soldier and the householder. The pilgrim of the zodiac develops the cardinal virtues while he is passing under the cardinal signs. He enters the cycle of incarnation under Aries, and there learns courage, self-assertion and initiative ; you will notice that we call it initiative under Aries, but under Libra we call it Initiation ; it is the same virtue turned the other way round, the virtue of having the pluck to begin. The first stage of growth is bound to be a stage of egotism, just as the baby is the supreme egoist of the household. Then under Cancer, the second of the cardinal signs, he learns the family virtues—his obligations to his home, to his clan, and to his nation. Then under the third cardinal sign, Libra, the ties which were ready-

made for him at birth are loosened, and he goes forward to make new ties of his own choosing. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife." He passes on from the family group to the voluntary association, the forming of the mystical body, the merging of the self into a corporate life. Finally he rises into Capricorn, and undertakes the *dharma* of the statesman ; and learns, among other good things, *prudence*, "the virtue of those who command, not of those who obey." Under the four cardinal signs we learn the four kinds of love ; first self-love, upon which, when it is raised to the point of self-respect, all other virtues are based ; secondly, love upwards, to parents, teachers, ancestors and kings ; thirdly the love of equals, the most difficult of all ; and fourthly, love downwards, the love of the wise ruler, the organiser of national and international life. It is well that we should pass through the discipline of obedience before we attempt the *dharma* of rulership ; it is a platitude to say that no man is fit to command until he has learned to obey. I would go further and say that only he who has learned to obey will learn to disobey wisely when the time for disobedience comes. And there is a stage in most lives when disobedience becomes the virtue for the hour. "If I have any virtue," cries Nietzsche, "it is that I have had no fear in the face of any prohibition !" In every great state there must be room for Alcibiades, as in the cosmos there must be room for Satan. But if, as we believe, the qualities needed for the perfecting of humanity are slowly built into the race by individual struggle and sacrifice, certainly nobody of aspirants has done more to build up the virtue of obedience than St. Ignatius and the Society of Jesus.

ESTHER WOOD.



## CONCEPTS OF THEOSOPHY.

### II. THE THEOSOPHIC CONCEPTION OF KNOWLEDGE.

(Continued from Vol. II. p. 237.)

Let us study a little more in detail the psychology of Negation as the one language of indicating the Self; and consider the value of the training of the human mind in the three languages of the Self known as the three *Vedas*. Let us take a concrete example, that of an object lighted by the rays of the sun, and of a man trying to realise the nature of the source of illumination from this simple phenomenon. Let us conceive that our operator has not as yet developed the mysterious sense of indicativeness, of *beyondness*, of transcendence. He may, thus working, note with wonder how the same object is seen once bright, and at other times in darkness, and he will not know the reason why. He will not be able to understand fully the meaning of these discrete phenomena; he will simply wonder. He may prate of God or of Nature, but he really means nothing save and except an effort to voice forth his wonder at the why and wherefrom of the varying appearances which constitute his world of objects. So does the *Bhagavadgîtâ* (II, 29) say :—

आश्चर्यवत् पश्यति कश्चिदेन  
माश्चर्यवत् वदति तथैवचान्यः ।  
आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति  
श्रुत्वाप्येनम् वेद नचैव कश्चित् ।

That is, one sees this wonderful Self dimly with wonder, another speaks of it with wonderment, others listen and

hear of its wonderful nature, while the rest know it not even though heard through the *S'âstras*. The majority of our humanity thus know not the Self in which man lives and moves and has his being.

Thus prompted by the spirit of *ekalâ* (unity) manifesting as the spirit of universality in the planes of phenomenal life which is ours, man tries to find out everything relating to the object so manifested by the rays of the sun, vainly hoping that thereby he may understand something of the source of all light. He sees how the constituents of the object, its molecularity, and so forth, have something to do with the lighted appearance, and the mode of light reflected by it. With wonderful patience and indefatigable energy he begins to collate the facts which govern the appearance (*pratibhâsha*) of light in these planes with the object as the substratum (*âdhâra*) thereof. This is the origin of the science of colours in the West, and of *varṇas'rama dharma*, the law of castes and stages of life, in the East. Even in this humble quest, he must know something of light, he must be endowed with some language of the Self, dim and vague though it be. He must be endowed with the dim sense of *sama*, uniformity and sameness of light, as illuminating the objects analysed. He must, while looking down on the object, have in his mind the light "which is not on sea or land"; otherwise he cannot infer from the constitution of the object anything of the laws of light. He must know the language of *vaikharî*, the *vaikharî âk*, and dimly realise the voice of the *Sâma Veda*. This will be apparent, when we see that the very phenomena of life which suggested to Prof. Myers the nature and existence of a larger life and consciousness, those uncanny phenomena intruding from somewhere into our mundane life, fail to arouse the majority of our race to any sense of the reality of the one and uniform life beyond the disjointed concrete.

It will further be clear how, though apparently accepting the One Life, the Theosophical literature fails to see that each individual is merely the base of manifestation, and that the so-called individual nature is but the result of *place* (*sthāna*) and mode of *energy* (*prayatna*) of the One Life manifesting ; and how, valuing things from the standpoint of the separately unique, we ignore the Self as the substratum of All—the one reality which confers phenomenal reality on the so-called apparent individuals. It is here significant to note how in this *Kali Yuga*—where life is limited to and apparently exhausted by the individuals—the *Sāma Veda* is the prevailing *Veda*, and how the one Branch of the *Veda* now extant is the *Kauthumeya*, that of the Lord called by men *Kuthumi*. Verily man must master the principles of the language of unity called *Sāma Veda* ere he can aspire to the other modes of the expression of the Self.

To revert to our analogy, our operator may thus know something of the constitution of the objects, as being similar though opposite in direction to the laws of light, for otherwise they could not be illumined into manifestation. He may find out the universal laws of the reflection of light, and realise that illumination is a universal effect, and that, though the individual objects be nearer or more distant from the as yet unknown source, yet the angle remains the same, and the rays are always parallel. We may with difficulty conceive what this means and indicates to the enquirer for the Self. It is of this that the *Bhagavadgītā* ( XIII, 27 ) speaks :—

समम् सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम्  
विनश्यत्स्वविनश्यतं यः पश्यति स पश्यति ।

“ Seated equally in all beings, the supreme *I's'vara*, indestructible within the destructible, he who thus seeth, he seeth.”

Just as the light is the same in every case, though its manifestation may vary with the object, so also the Self is

the same in everything, in the highest *deva* as in the worst criminal, the same in *Brahmā* as in the pansy at the feet of the English poet. Just as the effect of the enquiry into the nature and constitution, place and value of any object illumined by the rays of the sun, leads us thus in a mysterious way to the realisation of the wonderful sameness (*samatā*) of light, so all these painful, laborious, and often mistaken investigations and analyses of the various planes, of the various orders and hierarchies of beings, *etc.*, are but the expressions of the life manifesting as the language of the *Sāma Veda*, and are utterly useless unless leading up to this. This is the real import of brotherhood, which forms the corner-stone of any manifestation of the *Brahmavidyā*, for the same must, to be useful, conform to the language of the *Veda* now prevailing. It is only when we ignore the place and value of things, of concrete Teachers, and individual *Avatāras*, when we look more to the unity of life manifesting the apparent richness of concrete objects, nay, when we dimly see the unity to be of the Self, as the *beyondness* of life and consciousness, that we are really benefited by the mode of knowledge dominating humanity at the present moment, inspiring science to look beyond things and forces, and stimulating the various religions to see beyond the play of concrete manifestations. Thus, by looking for and seeing the unity of life (*samam*) in and through the *sarva*, the All, we see the mode of Self, of *I's'vara*, as indwelling the *Sāma Veda*, the language of *Sama*, permeating the language of concrete life, and so we attain to the stream of *beyondness* of life, the mode of indicativeness of the Self. This is what is meant in the *Bhagavadgītā*, XIII, 28 :—

समं पश्यन् हि सर्वत्र समवस्थितमीश्वरम्  
न हिनस्त्यात्मनाऽऽत्मानं ततो याति परां गतिम्

“ Seeing indeed everywhere the same *Is'vara* equally dwelling, he doth not destroy the Self by the self, and thus reacheth the supreme Goal.”

To continue the analogy of light, the stage of *Rik* is reached only when the downward trend of our consciousness, the objective bias therein, has been so purified by a recognition of the universal, that, instead of trying to learn the meaning of light in and through the phenomenal effects called colour, we begin to see it as the *glow*, the effulgence, no longer *in* objects, but as irradiating therefrom. This mode of indicativeness is what is referred to in the *Bhagavadgîtâ*, XIII, 17, as the effulgence which is the one source of all irradiation, all expressions of the same thing *out* of concrete objects and states, (*jyotishâmapi tajjyotih*)—“ the One Light which manifests the *sarva*, the All ” of the *Mundakopanishat*. So the *Chhândogya* ( I, iii, 1 ) says, That which irradiates *this* ( the object of definition ), That is the *Udgîta*, because It illumines (*uddyan* ), or irradiates as an effulgent unity out of the created *this* (*prajâtya udgâya* ), and dispels the fear of darkness which the creation of an apparent non-I limiting and conditioning the Self must create. This is only possible if man realises by positive synthesis of concrete experiences of light, that there is one thing called light which is beyond the phenomenal effects, and *in a negative way negates* or neglects the effects which are in time and space, conditioned by the constitution of the objects. This is illustrated in the story of the victorious or transcendent *devas*, as the definite modes or laws of reflection of the One Light, thinking of themselves as the cause. The *Kenopanishat* says “ they thought that the glory ( effulgence ) is ours ” (*asmâkam evâyam mahimeti* ). The *Upanishat* then describes how the *Brahman* manifested, and illustrated how all the powers of manifestation are useless without Him, and all glory is His, the *Brahman's*.

In the next stage he comes to know that illumination,

though related to the objects of his plane of consciousness, is possible only when there is a source of light outside all these, and illumining them equally; and then, by understanding the law of *ahañkāra* that the object is really the *tāmasic* aspect of the *sāttvic* power of light, and that the two are one in that sense, and thus realising a dim unity, he knows the law of reflection, that the angle of reflection is always equal but opposite in direction to the angle of incidence. Then only does he approach true knowledge. When he knows that the powers of sight must also be somehow correlated to the light as well as to the object, when he further sees that the very downward definitive trend of his sight towards separative uniqueness, within and without, makes an angle with the resisting object, and that the same angle must govern the impingence or incidence of light—then does he dimly see, by following the angle of impingement, the upward trend of light, reaching ultimately the source of all light, the sun. So also with the Self, the one transcendent source of all unity, illumination and power. It is only when we realise the true meaning of *ahañkāra* as indicating a unity between the I and the object, as well as the power or mode of consciousness used in any particular act of consciousness, when, no longer blinded by the thirst after the false unique in us, we accept the message of unity underlying, that we can know the meaning of the action of the senses, principles, and powers, and thereby understand the universal law which governs all modes of consciousness. Only by the realisation of these universal laws, the laws governing the angle of reflection, can we hope to know the meaning of the divine modes of Self-expression called the *Vāchas*. It is only when we have further developed the sense of *beyondness* of the Self—the sense that the Self is the ever-free life, ever beyond the most intimate union of the I with the things of any plane—when we see that the

depth of the Divine Life can never be fathomed by these expressions of life in their definite trend, and much less by any object, however high,—it is only then that we learn to utilise the very relational modes of the principles to take us beyond relation, and that, by learning the true meaning of the trend of *ahañkāra*, as the one power of indicating the I, the transcendent unity, we can see the majesty of the Self without being blinded by its glory. The acquisition of virtues, the practice of concentration, the path of service, are all of them useless, unless they are based on the universality of the Self, and the unity and ultimate transcendence of life. The languages of the Self, the manifested *vāchas*, do not help, unless we see in and through them the supernal unity and transcendence (*ekamevādvitīyam*) of the Self. They are useful only to the extent of placing the soul on a firm basis of unity, tending to purify the sense of the false unique. The evolution of man, the planes of being, and the various items of delectable information regarding occult hierarchies and sixth root-races, are useless, unless we can realise the solidarity of the life underlying everything, unless we learn thereby to give up the quest of the separated I.

It will perhaps be of help to us to try to understand a little the process of indicativeness, through which the many of manifestation merge into and are at rest in the one transcendent Self. It is here that one feels the glory and majesty of the *S'āstras*, in gradually inducing in man the various modes or languages of the Self, and the service to the spiritual evolution of humanity rendered by the *Purānas*. Turning to the *Bhāgavatam* and the *līlā* of the Lord in dispelling the illusions of *Brahmā*, we read how the great Creator, the *manas* of the cosmos in manifestation, wanting to test the divinity of *S'rī Krishna*, spirited away and kept enveloped in *māyā*, the cows and the cowherds of the divine shepherd; how the Lord, in order to manifest the *glory*,

became at once the individual cows as well as the cowherds. In the language of the *Purāna* ( X, xiii, 18 ) :—

**उभयायितात्मानं चक्रे विश्वं कृदीश्वरः**

that is, He polarised His Self into the two, He from whom emanates the *vis'va*, the All.

We will consider more fully later on the four principal states, '*padas*', as they are called, of the consciousness, and their import for a student of the Self. Suffice for the present to state that the condition in which, though one and incapable of division, the Self polarises into an apparent antithesis of I and object is the *vis'va* stage.

**अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम्**

“Not divided amid beings, and yet seated distributively.”

(*Bhagavadgītā*, XIII, 16.)

That the transcendent unity of consciousness is not lost in the process of polarisation is vividly described in the *Purāna*, where it states that the individual calves and cowherds thus manifested conformed in the minutest details to the individual peculiarities thereof, even to the particular sticks, particular ornaments, particular habits of each, proving thereby the truth that *Vishnu*, the Self, is the unity, the quintessence of the All (*sarvam vishnumayam*). The *māyāvic* cows thus evolved produced their calves and conformed to every standard by which we down here judge of reality.

The *Purāna* goes on to state how the *deva Bālarām* was mystified to find that the mothers of the cowherds and the calves felt more attraction for the *māyāvic* cowherds and calves, and how he noted that they felt similar attraction towards these as they felt for *S'ri Krishna* himself. He pondered :—

**नैते सुरेशो ऋषयो नचेति**

**त्वमेव भासीश भिदाश्रयोऽपि ।**



"I know that the cowherds were the great Gods, and the calves the incarnations of the *Rishis*. But now I do not see that way. For now I see *Thee* as radiating from each individual, the same in them all."

This strikes the key-note of the *Rik*, the language of irradiation. Like many of us, *Bâladeva* was content to see in the many separate individuals the incarnation of a separate cosmic being. With him, wisdom meant the tracing of individual lives into the remote past, in which the value of the individual depended on its indivisible and imperishable special quality. The individual thus is the result of *sthâna*, place in evolution, and *prayatna*, the *quantum* of the life and its mode manifesting ; and the unity of the Self is but the passive background setting in relief the persistence of the separate individual. So do we in these later days, try to see the individual *Rishi* in the Christ, and ignore the One Light which radiates therefrom. This shows that the unity of life is still a vague concept, a mere peg on which to hang our sense of reality of the separately unique.

To revert to the story, *Brahmâ* looked again, after a moment of time as prevailing in His sphere had elapsed, and saw the Lord again disporting with the calves and cowherds, and saw the same identical individuals spirited away by Him. Basing the sense of reality on outer signs and symbols, on bodies and equally phenomenal centres, He failed to realise which of the two sets of individuals were the real ones.

एवमेतेषु भेदेषु चिरं ध्यात्वा स आत्मभूः  
सत्याः के कतरे नेति ज्ञातुं नेष्टे कथञ्चनः

(*Bhâgavatam*, X, xiii, 43.)

"Even though He dwelt and pondered long over the *points of difference*, *Brahmâ* could not find which were the real."

Then all of a sudden the infinite compassion of the Lord shone out, and, to induce in the *Brahmâ* the real import of manifestation by the proper understanding of the language

of the Self, the concrete and mutually separative objects became each of the form divine of the Lord.

व्यदृश्यन्त घनश्यामाः पीतकौशियवाससः ।

चतुर्भुजाः

(*Ibid*, 40.)

That is to say, the Creator saw each as being of indigo blue, with yellow robes and four hands; and realised that all irradiation, everything which we term the *purusha* or the individual, is but the effulgence, the radiation beyond-wards of the One Self. The unique, the concrete of separation, of manifestation, becomes in a mysterious way indicative of the supernal unity and glory of the Self, somewhat in the same way that the individual richness of life is merged into and swells the grandeur of the I in us as the stream of transcendence of being and consciousness. Thus dazed and bewildered, the eleven senses which are the slayer of the true unity became quiescent, for they had nothing separately unique to play upon. On the other hand, owing to the sameness of life indicated through each, *buddhi* and consequent *dhyāna* resulted, and He saw the majestic panorama of the All, converging into and attaining to the one end or goal, the Lord, the *Brahman*, the unfathomable depth of consciousness. He saw that the variety of concrete objects, the infinity of modes of conscious life, and the principles of the Self, are there only to indicate, not the outer many, but the One in which they are one. He saw that the fruition of the definitive trend in our consciousness is not for any *thing*, *this* or *that*, but in order to indicate the line of mergence into a transcendent unity beyond everything, unaffected by the changes of the lower phenomenal planes, and He realised that for this Self alone everything exists.

The above story from perhaps the most occult of all *Purānas* illustrates the meaning of the transcendence of

the Self, and the stages through which finite consciousness working in a separative way is gradually led to the supernal unity, which is the fruition of everything manifest. It shows that the Self is first to be seen in the All (*sarvam*) and that through this universality of trend (*sarvātmikā pravṛitti*) the apparent *many* is merged into and becomes one with the Self as the I (*aham*). The *vāchas*, as the languages of Self-expression, are to be approached with this spirit of universality, and will then reveal certain laws or definite lines governing the synthesis or summation of the concrete points or terms of the expressions. We will therefore make an apparent digression into the nature of this synthetic faculty, and see what it has got to teach us of the Self, which is the One Goal towards which the whole series of expressions moves.

Now turning to the *Māndukyopaniṣat*, that wonderful collection of aphorisms as to the Self and the states of consciousness, we read :—

**अमृतमिदं सर्वं**

“This all is One, and this is the *akshara* (*Om*) or the changeless eternal Self.”

This assertion as to the *Om*, is not an *ipse dixit*, a crude meaningless symbol, sanctified by the superstitious Hindus, as we shall see later on. The immortal S'ankara takes this aphorism to indicate the two apparent steps of Self-realisation, through which the transcendent unity of consciousness is re-established in the aspirant after life. He takes it to indicate a synthesis by which the two poles of manifesting life are unified, the inner or transcendent trend, and the outer expression thereof. “The *This* (*idam*), the objective or perceptible (*dris'yamānam*), is the All (*sarvam*); and this is also the *akshara*, the *pranava*.” ‘*This*’ is what is technically called the *abhidhāya*, the indicated, the substratum, or the base at which all consciousness is at rest. All modes of consciousness in manifestation are ever trying to

attain to stability or rest with what we know as the object-mode of consciousness. So in the commentary of the *Vedānta Sūtras*, S'ankara says that all true knowledge is ever object-wards or has some permanent base where it attains to rest. The first stage of the Science of the Self begins when we learn that the *This (idam)* is not the separated object in time and space, nor an artificial flux of changing objects and relations which we call the planes; but that the object is the fount or base of universality and all-being, the all-pervading, the *Brahman*, and that the discrete many of name and form are strung together and synthesised by, and are there to indicate the universality and all-pervasiveness of being and consciousness. This is the meaning of *Light on the Path*, when it advises us to "seek out the way," that is, to realise the stream of consciousness tending towards the All, the universality of being. This is what the *Bhagavadgītā* (XIII, 28) means in saying:—

समं पश्यन् हि सर्वत्र समवस्थितमीश्वरम् ।

In other words, he who sees the I in the all. Science unfolds an ever-deepening aspiration to synthesise the disjointed many into an ever-approximating unity symbolised by the pronoun 'all'. The outwardness of the quest is but an adumbration of the *beyondness*, the transcendence of the Self. The threefold languages of the Self are also modes of this Self-approximation. Hence the *Kenopanishat* (I, 5) says :—

यन्मनसा न मनुते येनाहु मनो मतं  
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदं उपासते ।

"That which by the mind cannot be thought, by virtue of which it is said the mind has the power of thought, know thou that to be *Brahman*, and not this that is worshipped."

In other words, that which is not reached by mentality, that which underlies the limited artificial synthesis called

mentality, that is the *Brahman*, the universality of being, and not the *this* (*idam*), the object of separation and definition, which men think it to be. It is this All (*sarvam*) which underlies manifestation and *prakṛiti*, and in which the outer attains to perfection and rest, as we shall see later on.

The other part of the commentary relates to the next step of the Self-realisation—the recognition that this universality is not a mere addition of discrete things, nor even an organic unity in which the many still persist in their functions, nay, nor even an empty abstraction, but that this synthesis or unity is of the nature of the *Om*. Let us ponder over what is meant by *Om*, or its English equivalent, *Amen*. Just as the I in us can be viewed from the different standpoints of a unity incapable of being defined or exhausted, as well as of the expansion of a series in which the *many* of the physical—the desire-nature, the mind, *etc.*,—are all blended and unified, so also the Self has two poles of manifestation, of Self-indication. In the series  $I = a + b + c + d + e + \dots$ , if every one of us once works at it, we can attain to unity when we recognise that the I-pole is the unitary and the ever transcendent, and that, whatever be the contents of consciousness in a given moment, it is ever pointing towards the I. But so long as we have not worked at the other pole, the aspect of *expression* as against the *transcendence* of the I, so long as our concept is liable to be disturbed by the incursion of new terms into the series, or by the exclusion of effete terms already realised, so long we have not attained to the *akshara*, the changeless I, the real Self. For so long as we look to anything outer, the I ever recedes, and can never be reached. Says *Light on the Path*, “For when you have reached it, you have lost your (separated) self.” The I is thus the symbol ever-present and ever-operative, the *abhidhāna*, as S’ankara

terms it. You can never add to the I, for whatever is truly added becomes the I ; you cannot subtract from it, for the very things subtracted become also so many I's, like the sparks emanating from the parent flame. Human evolution is thus not with the I, but with the reduction, the perfect approximation of the series-pole, the pole of expansion. Says S'ankara in his commentary to the *Upanishat*, "Just as the rope is the substratum, the basic reality underlying the incursion of the snake, the piece of wood, *etc.*, which are seen illusively in the rope, so the transcendent I (*A'tman*) is the base in which appears the All, the expressions of *vāk* (*vāchprapancha*), the illusive appearances of *prāna* and other principles. That is the *Om*." What is meant is that it is through the realisation of the *Om* that we can truly negate and reduce the discrete and disjointed outer many, and thus re-establish the supreme unity of the Self, apparently disturbed into manifestation. That is why the *Bhāgavatam* (X, lxxxvii, 15) also says :—

अत ऋषयो दधुस्त्वयि मनोवचनाचरितम्

which S'rīdhara explains as follows :—"Therefore, Lord, Thou being the one unity and reality, the *Rishis* base their reality on Thee in a twofold way, *i.e.*, first by seeing that *manasā charitam* (the meaning of a thing is seen in the mind), that is, the meaning of everything is a transcendent trend reaching and attaining to rest at the I, the *purusha*; and also by knowing that *vachanā charitam*, (the meaning of a thing is expressed by speech), that is, the object is ever in Thee and of Thyself, in the selfsame way as the earth-*tattva* is indicated wherever we can plant our steps and attain to stability.

What, then, is the meaning of *Om*, as the principle through which the many are reduced into the All by the help of the universality of trend (*sarvātmikā bhāva*) which

alone constitutes *vidyā*? How does it help man to know that the All (*sarvam*) is the One? It is significant here to note that the symbol of all symbols, the *Om*, is viewed from two different standpoints, according to the stage of evolution of the aspirant disciple. It is *unitary* in one sense; **सचात्म स्वरूपमेव तदभिधायकत्वात्**, says S'ankara; that is, it is of the nature of the real I, the Self being its indicator. It is this unitary *Om* of which the *Bhagavadgītā* (VIII, 13) speaks:—

### ओमित्येकाक्षर ब्रह्म व्याहरन्नामनुस्मरन्

“Pronouncing the one-lettered *Om*, the *Brahman*, and following Me within,” is the exoteric translation of this *s'loka*, which contains in a nutshell the whole process of reaching the one imperishable Self, the Lord. For, if we scrutinise the meaning, it will indicate to us that, when we realise that the universality of Being, called *Brahman*, is the *Om*, as the One, and regathering and reintegrating the elements of uniqueness or transcendence held in saturation in our phenomenal life—when, by following the stream of upwelling life, of *beyondness of consciousness* contained in the I in us, we see this ever-present, unitary, transcendent, and supernal trend present always in us,—then, relinquishing the idea of manifested existence, and swimming as it were with the stream, we reach the Self. What this means will be explained more fully, when we treat of *I's'vara* and the Self in a later chapter. Suffice here to note that there is a mysterious mode of consciousness—if the word ‘mode’ can be applied with propriety to it—called the unitary *Om* in the symbolic language of the *S'āstras*, and that this is the principle at which all manifestations are at one. Now, exoterically regarded, every occultist knows that the word *Om* can be used for a twofold purpose; that, when the *yogī* seeks to transcend manifestation, he pronounces the word in a sharp and incisive way, in which the sounds of the

letters *A*, *U*, and *M* are blended into a unity ; but that there is another way of pronouncing the mystic word, by slowly pronouncing the *A* sound, which by imperceptible degrees merges into the *U* sound, which latter leads on to the ingoing *M* sound with the half-tone (*ardhamātrā*) vanishing off into the silence. It is further worthy of note that, in the latter way, the I-consciousness is gradually led into, or, which is nearer the truth, manifests or polarises into the three *padas* or states of consciousness with their contents, and man can study them. These three states correspond objectively to the three languages of consciousness we have been speaking of.

It will be further seen that, as the *Pras'nopanishat* ( III ) says :—

तिस्रोमात्रामृत्यमिता प्रयुक्तं

that is, these three measures (*mātrā*), or co-efficients of expansion, thus regarded as separate and not synthesised or integrated by the overshadowing unity of transcendent being, lead to the objective planes, and hence to the regions of Death as opposed to that of Immortality. The same truth is expressed in the *Kathopanishat* ( II, i, 4 ) :—

स्वप्नान्तं जागरितान्तं चोभौ येनानुपश्यति

महान्तं विभृमात्मानं मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ।

That is, he who sees the ordainer, the majestic Self, as underlying the end of the discrete states known as *jāgrata* or waking, and *svapna* or dreaming, he weeps not.

DREAMER.

(To be continued.)



## THE SYMBOLISM OF THE "BLUE BIRD."

It has been frequently remarked how those teachings that are specially associated with Modern Theosophy have during the last thirty years permeated every department of present-day literature and thought ; how they have insensibly grown to be a part of the general belief, interwoven, as it were, with the current conceptions of truth ; conceptions which, as a rule, have been adopted without much thought on the part of the majority, either intuitively, or more often because they are those put forward by the recognised leaders of thought. This may have been the result, in part at least, of the spread of the Theosophical Society and the devoted labours of its members in all parts of the world ; but it would seem also, and in a deeper sense, to be the natural evolution of human thought, the onward flow of the wave of life, under the guiding influence of the Master-mind behind it, bringing with it ever deeper and truer views of the meaning and end of life, of the universe, and of man. While the T. S. has undoubtedly been one of the main channels for its flow during the last nearly 40 years, we must not overlook the fact of the existence of many other channels through which the same life is flowing, and which are equally under the guidance of the one Master-mind.

It has often been further remarked that while this broadening tendency may be traced in all forms of thought—philosophic, scientific and artistic—it is specially noticeable in the poetry of the times ; and this is true not only of the present, but of every period, so far as we have any clue to go by. More especially is it in the poetry of a nation that we

find the essence of its religious belief, not indeed necessarily expressed in the particular poems in which that belief has been embodied, perhaps not at all definitely formulated, but bringing before the mind with sufficient clearness the fundamental principles upon which belief and poems alike are based. Thus in Horace, in Virgil, and again in Chaucer, Spenser and Shakespeare, in Milton, and later on in Cowper and Wordsworth, we find clearly portrayed the religious tendencies and aspirations of their day ; and at the present time it is to such writers as Browning, Mæterlinck, Ibsen, and others that we turn for the expressions of our deepest convictions ; not those of our earlier years, which are often only an inheritance from the past, but those which are gradually moulding our life, our thought and our character, whether as individuals, or as a nation or a race. There must be some deep reason for this, and it may perhaps be worth our while to try to discover what it is that enables these writers thus to embody the highest ideals of man, and to call forth a response from each individual soul.

It has been said that a poet is one who can *say* what others only *feel* ; or, in the words of Emerson, the poet is the "sayer," "the man without impediment," the "liberating God," setting free the unexpressed thought, and giving it through the expression a new and higher beauty. But Emerson also sets forth a deeper conception of the poet's function ; it is not merely the power of expression that makes the poet, but in a still greater degree the power of a deeper, or rather of a higher vision. The poet, he says, is the man "who sees and handles what other men dream of," the one to whom all things in heaven and earth are but symbols of the thought which he sees beneath them, who sees with that divine intuition which goes by the name of "imagination..... a high sort of seeing." If such is the poet's nature and functions, it is nothing to be wondered at that it is in the poetry

of our day that we should look for those sublime ideas which have power to fire the heart, to kindle enthusiasm, and to lead us ever onward towards those higher ideals which we may indeed never reach, but which are the guiding light beckoning us forward along the path. It is not the verse that makes the poetry, nor even the matter of the poem, but the hidden inspiring thought which lies behind, and which finds therein its expression ; and this thought is not always clearly enunciated, but lies half concealed, hinted at, and suggested, to be found only by those who have within themselves something which can respond to the poet's utterance, can see into the depths of his consciousness, and can thus share in a lesser degree his higher perceptions. The same poem will therefore appeal very differently to different readers ; while one will see only the charm of the rhythm or the beauty of the poetic imagery, to another, penetrating more deeply beneath the surface, it will give suggestions of deep spiritual truths, and an inspiration which has power to raise his whole being, for the time at least, to a higher level, and to give courage to meet and conquer the difficulties in his path.

Perhaps one of the most striking examples of this is Mæterlinck's charming little play, *The Blue Bird*. Superficially read, it is simply a pretty fairy tale, and there are those who have found in it just that and nothing more ; but to the student who looks below the surface, every page is suggestive of some inspiring idea, some deep religious thought. The incidents of the play are probably familiar to all :—the quest of the two children, Tytyl and Mytyl, for the Blue Bird, in obedience to the command of the Fairy, who “must absolutely have it” for her little sick child, whose ailment she does not know, but who “wants to be happy” ; their wanderings under the guidance of Light, and with the help of the magic diamond, by the turning of which all the inner life, the *souls*, of things around become visible to them ; their strange com-

panions on their journey—Bread, Sugar, Fire, Water, Milk, the Dog and the Cat, all of which have been endowed with reason and speech by the same magical means ; their search for the bird in the Land of Memory, in the Kingdom of Night, in the Forest, in the Palace of Happiness, in the Kingdom of the Past, and in the Realm of the Unborn ; their disappointment at finding, each time they think they have secured him, that he is not the bird they were seeking, for he has either changed colour or is dead ; their joy at finding him at last at the end of their travels in their own home, and his final escape just at the moment of fancied success.

It is not possible here to dwell in detail upon all the meaning which seems to lie beneath the beautiful imagery of the poem ; all that can be attempted is to try to understand the main idea, and to notice some of the most striking thoughts suggested by the varied incidents of the play. The blue bird has very generally been taken to represent happiness, though I believe that Mr. Henry Rose, in his interpretation of the poem, has treated it as the symbol of the higher Celestial Truth ; still more suggestive does it appear, if the quest of the children is taken as symbolising the search of the human soul for God, for the One Supreme Self, which is the goal of his being, "the great secret of things and of happiness," as expressed in the play. But indeed, the ideas are closely allied, and it makes but little difference how it is expressed ; for in the last analysis are not happiness and truth one, and is there any real happiness or any truth except as it is seen in the light of the Supreme, all else being but the dim reflection, the semblance of the reality ? This is clearly brought out in the course of the play ; at each stage of their pilgrimage the children think they have found the object of their search, and capturing the bird, imprison it in their cage, only to discover in every case, either that it cannot live in confinement, or that it is not after all that for

which they are seeking, for the colour has faded and they have only an ordinary black bird. Even when in the Kingdom of Night, by the opening of the last of the doors behind which are hidden all the terrors and evils of Nature gradually overcome by knowledge, they come into the dream-garden of perfect beauty, where myriads of blue birds are flying around, appearing to be the very life and atmosphere of the wonderful garden, and the children catch them by handfuls, even then they do not secure the only one that can live in the broad daylight, for he is "too high"; till at the close of their journey Light says to them, "it seems likely that the Blue Bird does not exist, or that he changes colour when he is caged." Is not this suggestive of the fact that the Eternal Infinite Truth can never be grasped by man while he is yet man? all that he can know of it being but a fragment, or a semblance of the reality, sufficient indeed to guide him on his further quest, but fading at last, or more correctly, merging into a higher and brighter light. This is what would seem to be vaguely hinted at by the final loss of the bird when found in their own home at last. Try to limit or to crystallise the Truth, and it loses its power.

Or again, to expand or vary the idea somewhat, may we not see here a picture of our efforts and aspirations towards the ideal life? When, it may be after many lives of endeavour, the ideal we have kept ever before us and which has been our beacon-light, becomes a reality in our lower life, not because the ideal has been lowered, but because we have ourselves risen to its level, does it not then seem to us to wear a changed aspect; to have lost some of its brilliancy? It must always be so, for an ideal, to be such, is ever above us, unreach-able, unattainable; with the attainment it loses its power of attraction and inspiration, and ceases to be an ideal. Yet ever another and a higher one rises before us, becoming the bright light on which our hopes are fixed, urging us on to nobler

efforts, till it becomes in its turn a part of ourselves, and we look forward to a still greater height. And so the true ideal is never attained, even as the real bird of their dreams and fancies never came into the possession of the children; always it was some other, and the reality still eluded their grasp. Yet the effort and the aspiration are not lost; and indeed, if attainment and satisfaction were possible, it would mean in the end stagnation and death.

The search must go on for ever, and indeed it is the one only good in life, the one quest worthy of the efforts of man; for "it is in the *attaining* and not in the attainment, in the *effort* and not in the rest, in the *struggle* and not in the victory, that the process of self-realisation, the deeper consciousness, the larger and higher life, which we desire and mean by immortality, truly consists."\*

Amongst the minor points of beauty and interest throughout the play, it is difficult to choose; but undoubtedly the most beautiful figure is that of Light, the unfailing guide of the children in all their wanderings; Light, who is so lovely that "the Fairy did not want to dress her at all," but who yet is veiled Light, who sends the children forward alone at the most critical moments, yet always reveals herself when needed; for "those who love me and whom I love will always find me again." It is by her wisdom and knowledge, together with the strength and devotion of the Dog, that they are saved at the most perilous juncture, when the souls of the forest trees and the animals, released from their long imprisonment of silence by the turning of the diamond, array themselves against the children for their destruction; lest they should "take possession of the Blue Bird and thus snatch from us the secret which we have kept since the origin of life," and thereby "man may make our servitude still harder." Are we not reminded here of the one true light within the heart, "the

\* *Creative Thought*, by W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.

only light that can be shed upon the path?" Perhaps one of the most beautiful scenes is that in the Palace of Happiness, when Light cannot appear in her own loveliness, "for there are many Happinesses that are afraid and not happy." But in spite of the thick veil in which she has enveloped herself, she is recognised by the Great Joys—Maternal Love, the Joy of Understanding, of Being Just, and of Seeing what is Beautiful. The close of the scene is so beautiful, I cannot forbear quoting it.

*Maternal Love.* But why does she hide herself? Does she never show her face?

*Tyltyl.* Oh, yes, but she is afraid that the Joys might be frightened if they saw too clearly.

*Maternal Love.* But doesn't she know we are waiting only for her? (Calling the other Great Joys.) Come, come, sisters! Come quickly, all of you! Light has come to visit us at last! (A stir among the Great Joys, who draw nearer, with cries of "Light is here!...Light...Light!")

*The Joy of Understanding* (thrusting all the others aside to come and embrace Light) You are Light, and we did not know it. And we have been waiting for you for years and years and years!...Do you recognise me?...I am the Joy of Understanding, who have been seeking you for so long!...We are very happy, but we cannot see beyond ourselves.

*The Joy of Being Just* (embracing Light in her turn). Do you recognise me? I am the Joy of Being Just, who have besought you so long...We are very happy, but we cannot see beyond our shadows.....

*The Joy of Seeing what is Beautiful* (also embracing Light). Do you recognise me? I am the Joy of Seeing what is Beautiful, who have loved you so dearly...We are very happy, but we cannot see beyond our dreams.

*The Joy of Understanding.* Come, sister, come, do not keep us waiting any longer...We are strong enough, we are pure enough...Put aside those veils which still conceal from us the last truths and the last happiness...See, all my sisters are kneeling at your feet...You are our queen and our reward...

*Light* (drawing her veils closer). Sisters, my beautiful sisters, I am obeying my Master...The hour is not yet come; it will strike, perhaps, and I shall return without fear and without shadow...Farewell, rise and let us kiss once more, like sisters lost and found, while waiting for the day that will soon appear.

*Maternal Love* (embracing Light). You have been very good to my poor little ones.

*Light.* I shall always be good to those who love one another.

*The Joy of Understanding* (going up to Light). Let thy last kiss be laid upon my forehead. (They exchange a long kiss, and when they separate and raise their heads, tears are in their eyes).

*Tyltyl* (surprised). Why are you crying ? (Looking at the other Joys) I say ! You're crying too !...But why have all of you tears in your eyes ?

*Light*. Hush, dear...(And the curtain falls.)"

Next in importance only to *Light*, in point of suggestiveness and interest, are the figures of the Dog and the Cat. The Dog is the faithful friend and defender of the children all through, the only one of their companions who never fails, never shrinks back, forgetting himself in love to his master, whom he speaks of always as "my little god !" His one desire is to pour out his love and devotion to him ; "I must kiss you now you've beaten me !" he says to *Tyltyl*, and covers him with kisses and caresses. So when all the rest prove faithless, willing to betray the children for their own advantage, the Dog alone stands firm. "This is ridiculous," he says. "There is Man and that's all ! We have to obey him and do as he tells us ! That is the one and only fact ! I recognise no one but him ! Hurrah for Man ! Man for ever ! In life or death, all for Man ! Man is God !" And when the Cat asks for his reasons, he says, "There are no reasons ! I love Man, and that's enough ! I alone against all of you... True to the gods, to the best, to the greatest !"

The courage and devotion of the Dog are brought out into bolder relief in contrast with the Cat, false, scheming and hypocritical ; from the very first he tries to stir up a spirit of rebellion in the little party, and it is always the Cat who leads the children astray, who betrays them and deserts them in the hour of danger, while professing ever the deepest affection. Between him and the Dog there is constant warfare, and I would venture to suggest that we may take them as symbolising devotion to the Higher Self on the one hand, and the seductions of the lower personal self on the other, together with the continual struggle between the two ; ever, as man follows his higher instincts, there is peace and safety for him, while the yielding to the lower leads him inevitably



towards destruction. Analogy and symbolism must not be taken too far, but this seems to me a legitimate interpretation of the two characters.

The Theosophical student will find throughout the play hints of many of the ideas usually associated with what is called Theosophic teaching ; as, for example, when the children visit their dead grandparents in the Land of Memory, when they find everything just as it used to be when they were on earth, but sleeping or inactive until roused by the thought of the living. "We get plenty of sleep," says the old grandfather, "while waiting for a thought of the living to come and wake us" ; and the children have only to think of their little dead brothers and sisters for them immediately to appear. The old blackbird sings as soon as their attention is called to him, and the clock strikes for the first time when Tyltyl wonders if it is not time for them to be going ; "we no longer think of the time," the old people say. Again, when the children are seeking for the Blue Bird amongst the tombs, which open upon the turning of the magic diamond, there appears nothing but an efflorescence, white and marvellous, transforming the graveyard into a fairy-like garden, and the children make the wonderful discovery that "there are no dead." And finally, there is the beautiful scene of the Kingdom of the Future, the Realm of the Unborn, where the Blue Children (everything there is blue), who are waiting to come to earth, are preparing the treasures they must bring with them. For none are allowed to go empty-handed ; something they must take, whether a great invention, a new idea, a noble work for humanity, or it may be a sickness or even a crime. At the appointed hour Time opens the great opalescent gates, nor can any whose turn has come escape his searching eye. The galley of the Dawn, with its white and gold sails flapping in the rosy mists, waits to take them to Earth ; farewells are exchanged between those departing

and those who are left behind, and as the sails of the galley disappear, the voices of the children seated within it are heard in the distance.

"The Earth ! the Earth ! I can see it ! How beautiful it is ! how bright it is ! how big it is !

(Then, as though issuing from the depths of the abyss, an extremely distant song of gladness and expectation.)

*Tyltyl* (to *Light*). What is that ? It is not they singing...It sounds like other voices.

*Light*. Yes, it is the song of the mothers coming out to meet them.

And Time closes the opalescent doors."

But it is not amid the relics of the past nor in the dreams of the future that the Blue Bird is to be found, for Truth dwells not in time nor in space, but in the heart of man, when his eyes are open to recognise it ; "if you cannot perceive it there, it is useless to look for it elsewhere."\*

So when the children reach home with the empty cage, they find there what they have gone so far to seek, and when *Tyltyl* turns to look at his own bird which he left behind, he is struck with astonishment to find that it is blue ! "Hullo !" he says—"why, it's blue ! But it's my turtle dove ! But he's much bluer than when I went away ! Why, that's the blue bird we were looking for ! We went so far, and he was here all the time ! Oh, but it's wonderful !" And it is not only the bird that appears to have changed, but all their surroundings. So he says of the house, "It's just as it was, but it's much prettier...And look at the forest ! how big and fine it is ! One would think it was new ! How happy I feel here ! how happy I am, happy, happy, happy !" Yet it is not the surroundings that have altered, but the eyes of the children that have been opened to perceive a newer, higher beauty in the things of their ordinary life. It is as though a glimpse of the Divine Light shining through everything had been permitted them, and in that glimpse everything had been transformed ; what

before was sordid and trivial had taken on a dignity unseer before, and revealed itself in its real meaning and beauty.

And so we are led to recognise that it is not upon external conditions, but upon our own inner attitude, that depend both our happiness and our power of spiritual perception—that, if we would find the One Eternal Truth, the One Self, as has been so well pointed out by “Dreamer” in his *Conception of the Self*, we must look for its indications in our lower life with its lower surroundings, no matter how mean and sordid they may appear to be. For it is not by any change of level, nor any rising to higher planes, that we may arrive at the knowledge of the Self, but only by a change in our attitude to our lower life, and in our conceptions of the relation of that lower life to the One Self.

I have given but a few very slight suggestions of the meaning of the poem, but it may perhaps be enough to show how deep religious truth may be concealed under the symbolism of a fairy-tale, and to stimulate the reader to search for himself; and in so doing he cannot fail to find some treasures hidden beneath the surface, which shall enrich his life, and give him yet nobler ideas of man’s destiny, of his relations with all around him, and of the path which will lead him to fuller light and knowledge.

MARIAN JUDSON.

“After all, it is not what is round, but what is in us; not what we have, but what we are, that makes us truly happy. We want a cheery fire on the hearth of our own spirits; a fire always clear, always at our command. Without that we have to go abroad for comfort, and we return to find our bosoms dark and cold. The mind is its own place, and must find its happiness within itself, or remain discontented whatever its outward lot.” (*C. Geikie*).

“Those who have the most of happiness think the least about it. But in thinking about and doing their duty happiness comes—because the heart and mind are occupied with earnest thought that touches at a thousand points the beautiful and sublime realities of the universe.” (*W. M. Thackeray*).

## BHAKTI IN HINDUISM.

### III. THE KARMA BHUMI ( LAND OF KARMA ).

The epithet *Karma Bhūmi* has something magnetic in it. To this day it stirs the soul of the pious Hindu to its depths. It is the blessed emblem of hope, the herald of release from the wheel of incessant death and birth, which remorselessly grinds and grinds, fed by the flame of *vāsanā* (desire). Round its adorable name cluster imperishable associations. It is reminiscent of a past in which heroic souls invoked the genius of *karma* and turned its mighty wheel with consummate skill and magnificent harmony of motion ; and the mysterious wheel, stored with dynamic energy, turned, again and again, with resonant music, not to bind, but to uplift and release. It carries the mind, across the bleak waste of centuries, to the historic forest of *Naimisha*, the busiest centre, perhaps, of a system of holy places, ever alive with the hum of holiest voices. Thither the *Rishi*, the redeemer of humanity, from all points of the compass, turned his weary and gentle footsteps to co-operate in *yajñas* (sacrifices) which oftentimes lasted from a hundred to a thousand years, and were intended, in the majority of cases, to quicken the somewhat tardy and recalcitrant pace of nature.

Where are all those scenes now ? The watch-dogs of *Kali* have driven the *Rishi* either into impenetrable concealment, or into exile in other *lokas*. The solitude of *Naimisha* is sepulchral, except when it is broken by the incursion of bands of pilgrims—a sad memorial of its bygone sanctity and glory.

The name *Karma Bhûmi* is especially dear to the pious Hindu on account of its associations with the land of his birth. The soil of *Bhâratavarsha*, bounded on the north by the Himâlaya, and on the south by the blue expanse of the sea, is, we are told in our sacred literature, *Karma Bhûmi*, the holy land of *karma*. All other soil, whether on this plane or on other planes, whether we express it in terms of *dvîpa*, island, or of *loka*, is *Bhoga Bhûmi*, land of enjoyment. Here, exposed to a baking heat and a freezing cold, to prolonged fast and brooding *tapas*, *kârmic* seeds are sown; in more genial *lokas*, under kinder skies, they bloom into effects. The invisible spiritual conditions of this soil are such that it is peculiarly, we might say almost exclusively, adapted to the creation of causes. The spiritual constitution of the other worlds, in contradistinction, is such that they are peculiarly adapted to a transmutation of those causes into effects. This chain of sequence in the causation of *karma*, which extends from *Bhâratavarsha* as centre to the uttermost verge of the universe, is, say the *Purânas*, predestined and immutable.

This, in brief, is the doctrine, mysterious, wonderful, fascinating, which, with a remarkable unanimity in thought and language, is enunciated by the *Purânas*. A glance at it will convince any one possessed of spiritual insight that it is one of those profound doctrines which shake the drowsy mortal out of his doze. Its mobility is awful. It gives a boundless expansion to life's horizon, and imparts to the least of its duties a momentous significance. It revolutionises the Hindu's moral system, and disperses with a terrific shock his comfortable doctrines of life. It brings to responsibility a weight which is oppressive. It affixes a value to time which is unalterable. To life it brings an intelligent motive, to motive it brings a new dynamic power. To *dharma* and *karma* and *jñâna* and *bhakti* it imparts an awful significance.

In the more spiritual *yugas*, among their more virile races,

this doctrine supplied a motive power to *dharma*. In their heart it awakened an eager responsive thrill to its impulse. It gave a vernal bloom to the ardour of their faith, and perpetually fed their efforts with mighty incentives. But the decay of *dharma* in this dark and effeminate *yuga* has brought a poisonous dry-rot on the life of the race. And with it, what was once a living doctrine of faith has faded out of recognition. Its lifeless carcase remains now buried in the neglected and despised pages of the *Purānas*, devoid of the power, which it once had, to create heroism in sacrifice.

But the doctrine possesses such overwhelming practical importance that its resurrection at this critical moment is a matter of the most absolute necessity. It is the supreme central key to all that in Hinduism is unintelligible, fantastic, preposterous in pretension, stupendous in conception and execution ; to the colossal dimensions of its fabric, to the marvellous complexity and finish, the superhuman patience and industry which are indelibly stamped upon every part of that fabric. We propose, therefore, to fill in the outline of the doctrine sketched above by the necessary citations from the proper authorities. We shall then study, within the limits of space at our disposal, its profound bearing upon the life and religion of the race.

Without an intelligent apprehension of the doctrine, *bhakti yoga* will miss its palpitating humanity, its soaring aspiration, the intense poetry of its faith. In the mighty shadow of the doctrine rest all the paths of release, from it they derive their mobility, almost their entire significance, the great concentrated purposes to which they all move.

As said a few lines above, the doctrine in question is enunciated with a remarkable similarity of thought and language in all the *Purānas*. To begin with, the statement of the *Vāyu Purānam* is brief but explicit :—

“From a statement in *Nirukta* ( one of the six *angas* or divisions of the *Veda* )

it is spoken of as *Bhāratavarsha*. From here *svarga* (heaven-world), *moksha* (liberation), middle (destiny), final (destiny) are reached. Verily, on land, nowhere else is *karma* for mortals enjoined by sacred commandment." (Chap. 49).

The *Matsya Purāṇam* follows the *Vāyu* almost word for word :—

"From a statement in *Nirukta* that *varsha* (a certain cosmogonical division) is called *Bhārata*, whence *svarga*, *moksha* and middle (destiny) are said (to be reached). Verily, on land, nowhere is *karma* for mortals enjoined by sacred commandment." (Chap. 114).

The *Vishnu Purāṇam*, in enunciating the doctrine in almost identical words, supplies a most important omission, and defines the boundaries of the mysterious soil, in which, in every particle, in every fibre, thrill such intense creative potencies.

"That which is north of the sea, and south of the Himālaya mountain—that *varsha* is named *Bhārata*. Hence is reached *svarga*, from here do men go to *mukti* (liberation). From here, as *munis*, do men fall into the state of animals, and hell too." (Book II. Chap. 3).

The last couplet of the extract is not reproduced, being an exact repetition of the last couplet of the *Vāyu Purāṇam*. The *Agni Purāṇam* notices the doctrine in a single couplet which puts it with much force and directness :—

"This is the land of *karma* for those who go to *svarga* and *moksha*" (Ch. 118).

The *Brahmānda Purāṇam* follows the brevity of the *Agni*, but, with two minor and unimportant alterations, its notice of the doctrine is an exact reproduction of the last couplet in the *Matsya Purāṇam*.

Thus far the citations which we have reproduced from the *S'āstras* speak of *Bhāratavarsha* as the land of *karma*. In none of them is there a single remote, not to say direct allusion to other lands as *Bhoga Bhūmi*, or land of enjoyment. This omission is rectified in other *Purāṇas*. A suggestive passage in the *Mārkaṇdeya Purāṇam* indicates, briefly indeed, but with sufficient explicitness, in what relation the different planes of our planet stand to one another in the creation and readjustment of *karma*.

“(In answer to) all that has been said by these, *karmā* nowhere else (is) productive of merit, or of sin, O thou of great destiny, excluding *Bhārata* (India). From here *svarga* and *moksha* and middle (destiny) are reached. Verily, nowhere else, on land, is *karma* enjoined by sacred commandment.” (Chap. 57).

It will be noticed that in this extract there is a clear assertion that *karma* in *Bhāratavarsha* alone is creative, that in all other lands, all other *lokas*, *karma* is divested of this mysterious creative potency.

The account given in the *Brahma Purāṇam* is much the fullest of all, and possesses the special merit, somewhat rare in the literature of the *Purāṇas*, of bringing together in one place the different parts of the doctrine. But there is one noteworthy peculiarity about it. The dozen or so couplets in which consists its account of the doctrine are with trifling alterations identical with couplets in one or other of the *Purāṇas* which notice it. Of this rather singular coincidence there is a rational, and, short of absolute certainty, true explanation. All careful and attentive students of the literature of the *Purāṇas* cannot have failed to observe that identical doctrines and definitions and sometimes even goodly sized stories are expressed in identical words. Such coincidences are fairly numerous.

The *Brahma Purāṇam* account begins, like other *Purāṇas*, with a definition of the area of *Bhāratavarsha*.

“On the north of the sea and south of the Himālaya mountain is the *varsha* (division) named *Bhārata*, of which the children are *Bhārata*, and (which) is, O the best of *dvijas*, nine thousand *yojanas* in extent.”

Having thus defined the area of the land, without which the doctrine would remain incomplete in a most important detail, the *Brahma*, in the following words, enunciates its mystic creative potency :—

“The land of *karma* is it of those who desire *svarga* and liberation.”

The two following couplets explain the deep significance of the mystical word *Karma Bhūmi*, and put it beyond all doubt that India is the only land in a system of seven worlds



which possesses the great privileges associated with the name.

“From here is *svarga* won, from here do (men) go to liberation ; from here, O *munis*, do men go to the state of a beast and to hell.....Verily, nowhere else, on land, is *karma* enjoined by sacred commandment.”

In the above extract there is, as we see, a perfectly clear and direct allusion to India as the mysterious land of *karma*. Another couplet, which we will reproduce in a moment, supplies all the necessary materials that are still wanting to fill in an important gap in the doctrine.

“Here, in this *Jambu Dvīpa*, *Bhārata* (*varsha*), O great *muni*, is superior, because verily this is land of *karma*, because all others are land of enjoyment.”

Two tiny little passages, one in the *Kârma*, and the other in the *Garuda Purāṇam*, throw the most curious and interesting side-light on the doctrine. The *Kârma Purāṇam* (Part I, chap. 44) in speaking of India as the land of *karma* says :—

“Land of *karma* it (is) of qualified men.”

As the important doctrine of *adhikāra*, (qualification, right) will be touched upon in another chapter, it is unnecessary to dilate upon it here, except to say that the doctrine of *karma*, which is the subject-matter of our study in this chapter, is subject to the limitations of *adhikāra*.

The passage in the *Garuda Purāṇam* (chap. 55), on the other hand, contains a most valuable hint as to the natural condition of all those lands which occupy, in relation to the doctrine, the position of *Bhoga Bhūmi*, land of enjoyment. Says the *Garuda* :—

“*Siddhi* (power) (is) natural, O *Rudra*, excluding *Bhārata* (India).”

In other words, all powers (*siddhis*) in India, the land of *karma*, are acquired, *i. e.*, they are the fruit of means directed to specific ends ; in all other lands, which are, in contradistinction, called the land of enjoyment, they are inborn.

From the above extracts it is clear that the doctrine which they formulate consists broadly of two mutually complementary parts, with one or two minor sub-divisions. The

first part speaks of India as the *Karma Bhūmi*, the land which, in the complex scheme of evolution, whether of *deva*, or of man, discharges the exceedingly responsible function of creation of *karma*. The second part treats of the correlated function of fruition of *karma*, which is shared by all the other lands in the universe, whether on the physical or on the extra-physical planes. In order that nothing should lack in its presentment, the doctrine also defines the boundaries of the mysterious area within which alone *karma* is endowed with the property of creativeness.

Naturally the most important question with respect to the first part is connected with the word *Karma Bhūmi*. The doctrine explicitly lays down that all good *karma* of a certain lofty type—all *karma* which exalts and emancipates, of which the fruition lies either in *svarga* or in *mukti* must be initiated, and carried through, within the geographical area of India. It also lays down that India is the predestined creative centre of all *karma* which degrades and extinguishes the personality—of which the accursed fruiting lies either in degradation into subhuman (*tiryaka*), bodies, or in a headlong plunge into the *naraka*, hell, in which the unhappy mortal passes through the horrors of a complete annihilation of his human personality.

In the whole universe there is no other land wherein the seeds of such *karma* can be sown. Within the geographical area of India all *karma* of the class spoken of above is creative—connected by immutable sequence of causation with their effects in the corresponding *lokas* of the universe. Outside of this area all *karma* is void of the creative potency.

One noteworthy peculiarity which distinguishes human evolution on the soil of India is that whatever *siddhis*, or powers, one possesses on it, one has to acquire them by effort. On all the other *lokas* of the universe these manifest from birth as natural and inborn endowments.

The second part of the doctrine postulates what naturally follows from the first, *viz.*, that all the other lands of the system of worlds, of which India is the centre, are *Bhoga Bhâmi*, land of enjoyment (of *karma*). In them powers and faculties are natural possessions. In India, the land of *karma*, man enjoys an unlimited freedom of creation. In that extraordinarily productive soil he can, provided he possesses the initial fitness, sow the seeds of an unlimited variety of *siddhis*. In these lands nothing whatever can be *created* that does not already manifest as a faculty. Their soil is not adapted to create; it can only nourish and foster. In their balmy atmosphere the seeds that have been sown amid sun and rain and sleet and hail on the hard soil of India ripen into bumper harvests.

There can be no doubt that in the above summary is outlined a novel and remarkable doctrine of *karma*. It enunciates a profound and hitherto unknown law which is far-reaching in its effect, *viz.*, that the generation of all *karma*, of which the fruition lies in worlds ranging from *Svarloka* upwards, is limited to a single centre on the physical plane, and that centre is India. Now, before we proceed further, one word of caution is absolutely necessary. We have called it a law above, and such in truth it is. It is not a temporary or accidental or fortuitous concurrence of circumstances. It is not certain groups of occurrences seized by poetic intelligence, embellished by poetic imagination, magnified by poetic judgment into fantastic proportions, and dignified with the imposing but deceptive title of law. It is, as will appear from a careful examination of the extracts we have quoted, a law of *karma*—an organic part of the general machinery whereby the law of *karma* works out in the universe.

A brief general idea of this machinery is indispensable to a thorough understanding of the significance and import of this new law. We all know that *karma* works out by ac-

tion and reaction, creation and fruition, sowing and reaping. In keeping this dual machinery in motion nature has from the first worked upon a remarkably suggestive principle of division. The physical plane humanity of our globe consists, as it has always consisted, of two broad divisions, the first comprising what may be called the rear—the large majority, who have worked their way through to our physical plane from denser worlds and lower and less evolved types of humanity. The second division includes those who always lead the van of evolution—the fragmentary minority, who are grouped round the banner of the *Sanâtana Dharma*, who, in the last *kalpa* either missed or refused *mukti*, who, in the delicacy and compact texture of their higher bodies, tower Colossus-like above the vast proletariat, and who alight upon our globe in the present *kalpa* either to finish the concluding stages of their pilgrimage, or by dint of austere *tapas* to wrest from nature the keys which unlock the portals of vastly loftier destinies.

From the dawn of the present *kalpa* nature has sought to segregate the more from the less advanced section of humanity—the van from the rear—and give each its separate field of evolution. As we shall see in a moment, her policy has, even on the physical plane, consistently followed, within practicable limits, the plan of territorial separation.

What we have called the rear of humanity—the vast proletariat—the huge army of ordinary mortals—has a triple sphere of evolution which is confined within three bodies, physical, passional (astral), and mental, in the three *lokas* of cosmos, *Bhuh*, *Bhuvar*, *Svar*—the *triloki*. Within this triple field their *kârmic* wheel gyrates. Taking *karma* in its dual aspects of creation and fruition, the field of its fruition, in the case of the ordinary man, comprises the *triloki*, while the field of its creation is limited to a single *loka*—the *Bhuh*, or rather, to put it accurately, the physical plane. Within this

somewhat circumscribed sphere *karma* is practically immune from all extraneous restrictions. All parts of it, without distinction, possess, from nature, equal creative power, and offer equal freedom of action.

This is, in broad outline, the law of *karma* of those who form the vast majority of humanity on our globe. The *karma* of those who form the crest of the evolutionary wave has an immeasurably wider field of fruition, and, paradoxical as it may appear, an immeasurably narrower field of creation. We have seen elsewhere that those who lead the van of evolution in the present, are in general the residuum of the past *kalpa*, consisting of highly advanced souls who have either missed or voluntarily renounced *mukti*. Among them are occasionally to be found visitants from the highest *lokas*—illustrious spiritual beings, who have cut themselves adrift from the chain of affinities of our system, and have, meteor-like, shot into unfathomed spaces of spiritual glory and illumination.

The *karma* of this grandiose efflorescence of humanity has a field of fruition of which the compass and glory fills the mind with awe. *Svarloka* is third, counting from below upwards, in the chain of seven worlds, or *lokas*, of which the supreme Overlord is *Brahmâ*. Beyond and above them, and interpenetrating them, are the fourteen *lokas* of *Vishnu*, which are replete with peculiarly tender associations for the Hindu mind, being the *lokas* in whose glorious and intensely vivific skies *mukti* proper materialises in its exalted freedom and bliss and *jñânam*.\* Beyond and above the *lokas*, of which *Vishnu* is the sovereign ruler, lie in succession the twenty-eight *lokas* of *Rudra* ; the fifty-eight *lokas* of *Mahes'vara* ; the more numerous and more glorious *lokas* which form the sovereignty of *Sadâs'iva*, the presiding *Deva* Intelligence of *A'kâsa Tattva*.

\* *Bhagavadgîtâ*, VIII, 15, 16.

Above the *lokas* of *Sadâs'iva*, and interpenetrating them, are the *lokas* of the *Kârana I's'vara* — the great cosmic Trinity, the supreme shoreless ocean, in which momentarily arise and disappear all the endless secondary trinities of evolution.

Above the *lokas* of the *Kârana* Trinity lie in succession the *lokas* of *I'kshita* (He who surveys preparatory to the creative process); the *lokas* of *Sarvajña* (the All-knower); the *lokas* of *Kârana Brahma*, the One Life manifesting as the supreme cause of All.

Higher still, enveloping and permeating, and giving life and light to all, and forming the mighty heart and centre of the universe, are the *lokas* of *S'iva Parames'vara*, the supreme *I's'vara*. Here is the end of all. Here is the last goal, the last boundary wall of all knowledge, all philosophy, all *tapas*, all effort. Here positive meets negative, here progression is converted into regression, here all life comes to a final halt.

This is the field, majestic, fruitful, immeasurable in compass, endless in variety, in which bears fruit the *karma* of the illustrious race of mortals who lead the van of evolution on our globe. How stupendous its dimensions! What varieties of planes and sub-planes are included within its area! What a magnificent sweep does it afford to aspiration! What unutterably rich and varied stores of experience does it yield! What majestic freedom! What ineffable bliss! What must be the range, the depth, the variety, the colossal volume, the soaring expansiveness of the *karma* which is gathered into harvest in this field!

Strange, surprising, paradoxical as it may appear, the field of creation of this leviathan mass of *karma*—the field in which its seeds are sown—is, in comparison, illogically, extraordinarily small. The field of its fruition expands to the whole known universe with or without the *triloki*. The field of its creation shrinks into a little centre comprising a few thousand square miles of territory. This great, mysterious,

occult seed-bed of higher *karma* is the land of India. Such is the plain, direct, straightforward, unanimous teaching of the *Purāṇas*. The creative centre of all *karma* whatever, of which the fruition lies from *Svarloka* to *Vishnu Loka* where begin the frontiers of *mukti*, is the soil of India. The creative field of even loftier destinies—destinies which yield their fruitage in *Paranirvāṇic* and *Mahāparanirvāṇic* bliss, is the soil of India. The endless *lokas*, piled row upon row, tier upon tier, which have been crowded into our universe, are, with the one exception of India, all *Bhoga Bhūmi*—land of enjoyment. Sterility is their universal, deep-seated, incurable characteristic. Their romantic beauty, their ravishing charm, their intoxicating delight, their ineffable freedom and bliss, have *all* been paid for elsewhere. In them not an atom of *karma* can be created which ripens into fruitage elsewhere. The power to create *karma* is the divinely bestowed privilege of India, and India alone.

It has been said above that India is the sole creative soil of all causes which find their majestic fruitage in the *Para* and *Mahāparanirvāṇic lokas*, and even beyond. Now, this is neither poetic fiction nor poetic hyperbole. The literature of the *Purāṇas* abounds with dozens upon dozens of illustrative stories. Here *Dhruva*, a little boy of five, the victim of the cruel jealousy of a step-mother, sought redress in *tapas*, repaired to the forest, concentrated his mind on *Nārāyaṇa*, drew His notice, and obtained from Him the boon which made him the Regent of the pole-star, which exalted cosmic office he still holds. Here came the dread *Rāvana* all the way from Lankā, set up his *ās'rama* on the slopes of the Himālaya, engaged in *tapas*, which oppressed and terrified *deva*, *rishi* and man, pleased *Mahādeva*, won from Him invincibility and the accursed privilege of being the scourge of the *triloki*. Here was born a little son to Rishi *S'ilāda*, the idol of his father, who was disconsolate with grief when he heard the cruel

words that his darling boy, the joy of his age, would die before the year was out. Little *S'ailâdi* of five heard it, bade his father be of good cheer, and made a vow that he would vanquish death by adoring *Mahâdeva*, the Vanquisher of Death (*Mrityunjaya*). He repaired to a neighbouring forest, fixed his mind upon *Mahâdeva* and told his *mantra*. And then happened an event strange, romantic, unique, incredible. *Mahâdeva* appeared before him, raised him from the ground, and with His own hand wiped the perspiration and dust from his face. And as the words of divinest compassion and hope fell in melting accents from His august lips little *S'ailâdi* changed his mortal body of clay into the radiant and immortal form of *Rudra*. He is now the generalissimo of the *Gunas*, and a trusted and beloved companion of His Lord. He is married to the only daughter of the *Maruts*, and His sacred name is invoked, in all important ceremonies, along with that of the Lord whose companion he is. There was a time when *Nandîs'vara*, the formidable warrior *Rudra*, compassionate friend and redeemer of man, and the terror of *asuras*, abode in this land in a human body.

Readers of the literature of the *Purânas* will easily recall to mind similar other stories, which possess less thrilling interest indeed, but which carry the mind to a higher plane of thought. We are told how on those romantic slopes of the Himâlaya, where silence itself is audible, where, charmed by their sanctity, nature is wooed into spontaneous and perpetual profusion, the highest creative *I's'varas* and Their Consorts have engaged in *tapas*. It was there that *S'rî Krishna* pleased by *tapas* *Mahâdeva* on two different occasions, and won from Him innumerable favours. It was there that *Durgâ* made *tapas* and won the exalted cosmic office She now holds—the *mûlaprakriti* of cosmos, the universal Mother of all that lives and breathes, from the microbe to the highest *Deva*. It was there that *Pârvatî* fasted and prayed and worshipped, and won from



*S'iva* the right to be His supreme Consort in life. It was there, in sheltered retreats of adorable beauty and calm, that *S'iva* himself used to engage in *tapas* and commune with His own *A'tmā*.

The story of *Nandīś'vara Rudra* related in the *S'iva* and other *Purānas* suggests a profound deduction of far-reaching consequences. It shows a gigantic and unheard-of leap from *Bhurloka* to *S'iva Loka*—from humanity to Divinity. He has all the powers of a creative *I's'vara*, although He does not actually hold the office of one. Of this vast and soaring destiny, which fills the imagination with awe by its sheer magnitude, India is the creative centre. It is the one grand cosmic amphitheatre in which, before the collective gaze of *deva*, *asura* and man, the loftiest and most enduring prizes are won.

And this suggests that the foregoing facts may be put in the more precise and effective, more impressive form of a doctrine. From the view-point of *karma*—of its creation and fruition—the whole known cosmos may be regarded as a huge sphere, being the aggregate of a countless number of concentric spheres, having all a *common* centre, which is India. The word 'common' is put in italics in order to emphasise the *kārmic* connection which exists between this land and the whole universe. It extends *inward* on an ascending scale of rarity from *Bhurloka*, right through the *lokas* of *Brahmā*, *Vishnu*, *Rudra*, etc., to the transcendently glorious *lokas* of *S'iva*. It extends *outward* on an ascending scale of density right through the seven *talas* to the densest regions which touch the outermost shell of the Cosmic Egg (*Brahmānda*). Among all these *lokas* there is not one with which India is not connected by the mighty chain of *karma*. The common centre—India—is *Karma Bhūmi*, the land in which are laid deep the seeds of destinies. The concentric spheres—the diverse *lokas*—are *Bhoga Bhūmi*, the land where the destiny seeds ripen into harvest. A common soil for the creation, a

varied and multiple soil for the exhaustion or enjoyment—such is the simple but profound theory of higher *karma*.

One obvious deduction of considerable interest, which the foregoing facts suggest, is that there is a regular network of invisible highways, which connect India with all the other *lokas*. It is along this maze of magnetic pathways, which spread like radii in all directions of the compass, that the *jîva*, towed by his *karma*, is piloted to these *lokas*. It is perhaps superfluous to add that these other *lokas* have no such system of inter-communication among themselves.

The above deduction may be expressed in a slightly different variant. That India is the common centre of a vast network of *lokas* is as much as to say that India is nature's gateway to all the higher *lokas* of the universe ranging from *Svarloka* upwards. At the present stage of human evolution, all access to the higher spiritual regions lies through an abnormal development of faculties. They swing open their gates only to the privileged mortal who has provided himself with their secret key, and gone through the necessary training on the soil of India. There is no other access to them, and to all profane intruders they remain as impenetrable as though they were the fabled Ali Baba's cave.

Whence it becomes evident on a very little reflection that all those great souls, who have developed, or are qualified by past evolution to develop bodies in which they can assimilate the intensely expansive experience provided by the higher spiritual *lokas*, must be brought to incarnate in India. The present *Kali Yuga* does not, it is true, provide an adequate and satisfactory test of the doctrine. The rampant spirit of the age is materialistic and disruptive; before the headlong sweep of its resistless impulse, all the ancient land-marks are crumbling into fragments; the *Sanâtana Dharma*, solace and stay of Indian spirituality, has received a vital stab in the heart, and is rapidly approaching extinction. Nevertheless, it is

true that the slopes of the Himâlayas, which once rang to the music of divinest voices, are to this day the asylum, alike in tradition and in fact, of the highest spirituality in the world.

But the grandest illustration of the doctrine is supplied by the first three *Yugas*, *Satya*, *Treta*, *Drâpara*, of which the history is preserved in the literature of the *Purânas*, the *Mahâbhârata* and the *Râmâyanam*. We learn from it that within the boundaries of India were gathered in those never-to-be-forgotten days, in their hundreds of thousands and millions, the noblest fruitage of humanity—men and women who had touched the meridian of virtue, and shot into deific levels of spiritual illumination. We learn from it that India has been the chosen theatre of exploits of those *avatâras* which have manifested on our globe, and that it is the predestined scene of the labours of the future *avatâra*, the *Kalki*. We read in it that in India were incarnated in those misty and far-off ages countless hosts of *Rishis*, whose genealogy is traced, and whose names, in part at any rate, are preserved in the *Purânas*, and whose spiritual illumination and *siddhis* ranged from the highest levels of humanity to those of creative *I's'varas*. Here were born, as the sacred records testify in untold numbers, heroes in *dharma* (*dharma vîra*), heroes in *karma* (*karma-vîra*), heroes in fight (*rana-vîra*), heroes in charity (*dâna-vîra*), who made a votive offering of their all—who have all ascended to the highest *lokas* of *Svarga*, and who, when their hour strikes, will redescend to this land to hew and carve yet more majestic destinies. Here were born little lads of five to seven, whose bodies were luminous with fiery spiritual energy, whose word was irrevocable, and at whose feet nature fell prostrate in silent adoration.\*

A PAURANIC STUDENT.

(*To be continued.*)

\* King *Parikshit* was cursed to die by the little son of *Rishi Samika*, who was not over five. There are other instances on record of child prodigies of equal spiritual powers.

## COGITATIONS OF A STUDENT OF THEOSOPHY.

(Continued from Vol. II, p. 271.)

A careful study of the great mystics who have left records behind them, serves, I think, to confirm and strengthen the views set forth in the preceding paper with regard to the fundamental character and nature of intuition. The testimony of mystics from all ages and countries is unanimously to the effect that the higher mystic states especially are marked by an enormous increase in the range and power of *direct perception*. From the language they use, despite its often theological colouring, it becomes clear that in such states the mystic claims to enjoy a *direct perception* of truths wholly apart from any *process* of reasoning, truths indeed far beyond the reach of any normal power of inference or reasoning he may happen to possess. In such states, then, we may expect to find examples and illustrations of 'intuition', exhibiting its nature, its scope, and its power less inadequately perhaps than does the normal course of our waking experience. But even so, it still seems to me that even in these higher and more widely extended ranges, we are dealing with what is fundamentally and essentially the same power of 'awaring,' of 'direct perception' with which we are so familiar every moment of our waking lives in the form of the 'sense-perception' of physical objects. And perhaps it may make our further enquiry easier and less confused, if we try, however roughly, to classify in a very general way the main types of such perception according to the objects with which it is concerned—the term 'object' being here understood in its widest possible signification.

We have first, then, the perception of physical objects through the organs of sense. And, in passing, one may note that the total resultant 'perception' of a physical object as an adult experiences it, is really a very complex product, containing much of memory, inference and expectation, fused with the relatively small kernel of what is actually directly perceived at the moment.

Next we have a similar class of perceptions of bodily feelings, pains, pleasure, and the like, together with those of the emotions and their associated states.

Then comes the perception of thoughts, ideas, memories and so on in whatever form, whether as visually pictured, as symbolised by words or sounds, or however else they may appear in the mental life of each of us.

And, personally, I hold that we have direct perception of relations as such ; that we directly *perceive*, for instance, when once we understand the demonstration, the relation between the sides of a triangle which involves the properties of the figure. But I incline to think that this order of perceptions—that of relations—belongs properly to a different and deeper level than does the perception of ideas, thoughts and so on.

Indeed it seems to me that this class of direct perceptions is on or near the border-land where 'intuition,' *in its narrower and more restricted sense*, begins to show itself. For in this region we are coming in touch with *meaning*, with truths, with discoveries, the grasping of which illustrates 'intuition' in this narrower sense of the perception and discovery of truth.

It is to this region that belong, I believe, those typical 'flashes' of intuition and discovery, which often take volumes of print, years of work and experiment to unravel, to make clear and cogent to other people.

One often hears it said, as a criticism on the value of mysticism and its cogeners, that the much belauded 'intui-

tion' of the mystic has never yet led to any solid verifiable discovery of real practical value to humanity. But to me it seems that this criticism is wholly unjustified and misleading, since it rests upon a confusion as to fact, coupled with a not unnatural, but, for all that, erroneous association of ideas in the minds of those who urge it so confidently.

The misleading association of ideas is that which connects the idea of 'intuition' primarily and peculiarly with mysticism and the mystics. While it is true that the mystics lay special stress upon 'intuition,' attaching peculiar importance thereto, and though it figures with special prominence in their writings, intuition is by no means the special possession of the mystics nor does it belong to them in any exclusive sense. On the contrary, as has been already pointed out, intuition or direct 'awaring' is *the* essential, fundamental fact of conscious life, playing a leading rôle in each and every domain of experience.

What I think has led to this specially close association of the idea of intuition with mysticism and the mystics, is that in their own special domain of experience, intuition pure and simple plays a very prominent part in relation to experiences and truths which stir the depths of the human heart, and evoke most powerful emotions and feelings. Moreover in their writings the mystics have constantly appropriated to their own purposes the term 'intuition' itself, giving to it a peculiar and highly specialised significance. Hence has arisen, it seems to me, the somewhat misleading association in people's minds, which leads them to connect 'intuition' with mysticism in some form or other, thus giving a sort of *primâ facie* appearance of justification to the criticism referred to above.

But as has been pointed out, this criticism in its broad form is quite unjustified ; for it really rests upon a confusion of fact. It is not 'intuition' *as such* to which it applies at

all, but a very limited and special class or field of experience to which alone it is in any sense relevant. For consider the great discoverers of recent times: Newton, Faraday and the like. In each and every case, on studying their lives, one finds that their great discoveries have been due to 'intuition'—in most cases so testified to by themselves. It is really entirely a question of the *subject-matter* to which 'intuition' or 'direct perception' happens to be applied. In the case of Newton it was the facts and observations of astronomy which filled his mind, and there came to him the illuminative flash of intuition, the 'direct perception' of that underlying relation which is expressed in the law of Gravitation. Faraday's mind was full of facts about electricity and magnetism, and to him came the intuition or 'direct perception' of their underlying relations, which makes his work a still unexhausted mine of fertile suggestion. And so in all the many and various domains, not of science only, but of every realm of human activity and productive power.

Thus it is in fact only to the special realm of religious and spiritual experience, or more accurately to the realm of mystic experience proper, that this criticism applies at all and even then it is, to say the very least, an extremely open and debatable question whether or no the results in this special field, which must anyhow be credited to the exercise of intuition, are really 'worthless' and 'unverifiable' even when viewed from a *practical* standpoint. Personally I think that human history yields most ample testimony to their value and even to their great *practical* importance in human life and the development of civilisation; while recent developments in philosophical thinking would seem to confirm this view.

But let us pass from these general considerations to a rather closer examination of the occult and the mystic aspects of the subject.

With regard to what are usually called, for instance, in Theosophic parlance, the Astral and Lower Mental realms of experience, it would seem from the statements made and the descriptions given that what has been said above about 'intuition' would apply to these regions also. Thus in the astral world there would seem to obtain something closely analogous to direct sense-perception of external objects, coupled with inference, reasoning and the like, as well as the more restricted type of 'intuition' dealing with all these forms of experience in much the same way as that special type of intuition deals with the analogous experiences of our ordinary waking life. It seems probable, however, or at least to be suggested by the observations reported, that this last special form of intuition may be more active and prominent, may play a larger part, relatively speaking, in the average human life of the astral world than it does at present in our physical one. But even so, speaking generally, I have found nothing in the literature of the subject to show that 'intuition' in the astral world differs at all radically, either in nature or action, from intuition as we know it in our ordinary experience.

With regard to what has been called the Lower Mental plane, the facts do not seem to me to be equally clear and unmistakable, because those who have so far published descriptions of this region of experience as distinct from what may be termed the lower mental life of our normal waking experience, do not seem to have paid sufficient attention to its special characteristics from the standpoint of systematic psychology and philosophy. Thus, taking both the *bona fides* and the accuracy of such descriptions as they have given us for granted, one gathers that the various levels of the lower mental realm are occupied in large part by 'mental images' in the widest sense—not specially 'visual' images, but equally auditory or other, perhaps innumerable, kinds and modes in which men-



tal life as connected with the concrete expresses itself. And there are indications also of the presence of other modes of mental life than those more or less connected with, or derived from, the experience of the actual concrete. Little has been said, however, on this side of the matter and practically nothing definite; and we are left, on the whole, with the idea that the lower mental world is a realm of mental *images*, so far as what may be formed its objective aspect is concerned. Further we are left quite in the dark about what is really of serious importance, *viz.*, the question of 'relations'—to use the usual philosophical terminology.

Thus we know from our normal experience that the contents of 'mind' consist not only in the 'images' which belong clearly to the lower mental world, but also very largely of '*relations*,' which ordinary psychology generally regards as the product of mental activity working upon the 'images' already mentioned; though recent investigation and research has made it more than probable that these 'relations'—at any rate the relations between sense objects—are just as much 'given' to the perceiver, and just as much 'perceived' as the objects themselves.

Hitherto none of the seers have thrown any light on this problem; nor have they even told us whether 'relations' as such belong to the same level as the images related by them or to a higher one. Personally I am inclined to regard 'relations' as belonging rather to the abstract than to the concrete aspect of mind, that is, to place them along with abstract ideas and thoughts in the region of the higher rather than in that of the lower mind. And I rather think that it is this direct perception of relations, connections and the like, which constitutes 'intellectual intuition,' in the narrower and more restricted sense.

For some seers at any rate tell us—to use their own special phraseology—that when consciousness is functioning freely

and self-consciously in the Causal Body, there arises full and complete intuitive knowledge of any matter to which the attention is directed ; and, as far as one can gather from their writings, this 'full' knowledge of any matter turns out to mean 'knowing all *about* it'—that is, knowing or rather directly perceiving *all the relations and connections and bearings* of the matter in question. But the realm of the Causal Body is that of the abstract as contrasted with the concrete, and since this intuition or clear direct perception *about* any matter seems to be a special characteristic of this realm, it tends to support the idea that 'relations' and their 'direct perception' belong properly to the former rather than to the latter.

Hitherto we have been considering exclusively that kind of intuition in which the distinction between Subject and Object, in the broadest sense of those terms, is clearly marked. In all the types and forms of intuition, as in all the examples we have dealt with, we find on examination that there obtains a distinct, marked 'otherness,' between the subject, whose direct perception constitutes the intuition, and the objects, whether physical or mental, whether things, images, relations, meanings, or what not. The latter are in all cases 'other' than, distinct from, the former, to whatever level they may chance to belong, and they are recognised and felt as such.

But I believe there is also another and different type of intuition, the workings of which are generally confused with those of what I will call the 'intellectual intuition' that we have been considering hitherto. And while I think that a certain amount of evidence for the existence of this further type of intuition, as well as some examples of its working, can be found within the circle of our normal waking everyday experience, I incline to believe that a good deal more may be learned about it and a clearer light thrown upon it, from a careful, detailed study of the works of the great mystics.

The characteristic marks which, it seems to me, distin-

guish this further type of intuition from the 'intellectual intuition' we have so far been studying, are two in number. The first is the absence of that 'otherness' which marks the Subject-Object distinction already noted as characterising all the forms of 'intellectual' intuition.

In all cases of the latter, the experiencer feels himself more or less separate from, outside of, other than, the matter to which his intuition relates. This is 'other' than himself, it stands more or less apart from him, it is something he *knows*, not something that he actually *is*, at that particular moment; even though it may be ideas in his mind, traits in his character, memories of his own past.

But in a typical case of this other kind of intuition, the characteristic mark just described is entirely absent. The experiencer feels himself *one with* the matter in question, he does not, as it were, 'see' it from outside, but 'feels' it from inside. He is within the thing, not outside, distinct or apart from it, at all. In fact he *is* the thing in feeling, rather than that he 'knows' it as something else.

The second characteristic mark of this kind of intuition is that it seems to be more closely allied with, or akin to, *feeling* rather than *thought*. I had almost written "more closely akin to feeling rather than to knowing"; but to use the last word "knowing" might too easily mislead by suggesting something I do not mean to imply. For although, in the range of our normal experience, the working of this kind of intuition appears most often in the form of 'feeling' rather than 'knowing,' if one uses 'knowing' in the ordinary sense of mental or intellectual knowing; yet I have no doubt at all myself that, when this kind of intuition does actually occur, the outcome *is* 'knowing' in a very real and true sense indeed, though that 'knowledge' mostly cannot express itself at all adequately in terms of the mind or the intellect as so far developed in the average human.

This kind of intuition is comparatively very rare among men, though I incline to think that it can more often be traced in the case of women, and that it plays a more marked part in their lives than in those of the other sex. But so little systematic thought and study has been given to the subject that one is perforce extremely reluctant to venture on any positive statements in relation to it.

But at least I myself firmly believe that 'intuition' does work in these two distinct forms: the one 'intellectual', which we have considered at some length; the other, at present nameless, with which we are now occupied; which I ought perhaps to try and describe more closely, though I greatly fear any such attempt will meet with exceedingly poor success, as things stand.

As I have implied, the working of this kind of intuition in our normal life, seems to me to be allied with feeling, or rather to appear under the form of feeling. Perhaps its most frequent manifestation—though even that is rather rare, especially in men—is, I believe, in the form of an intense inner *conviction*, for which no adequate intellectual ground can be shown, and no intellectually sound and satisfactory proof can be given. But there is one very serious and misleading illusion in this connection, which makes the examination of these convictions peculiarly difficult, and all too frequently leads enquirers to discard these 'convictions' as altogether worthless and invalid. The pitfall in the road is this. The conviction itself is clearly *feeling*; but that feeling relates itself (usually) to some statement, some dogma, some more or less definite *formulation of thought*. Now the trouble is that this dogma, formula, thought—or whatever it happens to be—is not *really the intuition at all* in the case we are considering, but is only a mere symbol or signpost, a direction-indicator at best, and *nothing more*. For in the very nature of the case this formula (or whatever it may be) must needs be mental

or intellectual in nature, and we have already seen the character of *intellectual* intuition ; but here we are dealing with the other kind, and the 'formula' in question is not, and cannot be *its* work, but at best some sort of symbol or direction-indicator *created by the intellect or the mind*, to point to something *beyond its own range and scope*. But all too often we either do not know or else forget this, and so take the inner *conviction* (which is the real outworking of this kind of intuition) as validating the *formula*, the mere signpost itself, instead of realising that the conviction is but the expression of an 'intuition' relating to something beyond the power of the intellect to express and formulate in its own terms. Hence we cling to the formula, to the signpost, instead of following the intuition along the road to which it points.

I am of course here dealing *ex hypothesi* with a *real intuition* of this type. Unfortunately we humans have far more experience, both in ourselves and others, of 'feelings' and 'convictions' which are anything but examples of such real intuitions. Indeed such pseudo-intuitions form, I should think, at least ninety-nine hundredths of what we mistakenly regard as 'intuitions' of this type. For just because real intuitions of this kind do appear, in the rare cases when they come to us, under the form of 'feeling,' and not as clear illuminating *perceptions*, as is the case with intellectual intuitions,—just because of that we are so often mistaken and misled by what we imagine to be real intuitions of this type, that many people deny their existence altogether, while others, less extreme, either neglect them entirely, or at best regard them with exaggerated mistrust. Some there are, on the other hand, who go to the opposite extreme and accept as 'real intuitions' of this order any strong conviction which meets with their unreserved acceptance, or any powerful 'feeling' which seems to guide them, whether with or without any reasoning or intellectual insight.

Both of these attitudes are equally mistaken ; though I am bound to admit that the former is, perhaps, on the whole less dangerous, less liable to lead one into serious trouble, than is the latter. For it is precisely the cloud of personal feeling, of unrecognised preconception and prejudice, of likes and dislikes of all kinds originating in all sorts of ways, that makes most careful *discrimination* in this respect so indispensable. It is in this region of 'feeling' as much, if not more than in that of mind, that the purification and diminution of the 'personality' is so absolutely necessary an equipment for anyone who desires to develop and rely upon 'intuition.' And it is always well to remember that while 'intellectual intuition' even, and still more the normal use of the intellect in reasoning, may be *inadequate* to express or to formulate that which lies beyond, yet it is in the nature of things *impossible* that this 'beyond' can *contradict* or make false the intellectual. For it must be *more*, not *less* than the intellect, hence whatever of it the intellect can express or indicate must be true and valid *so far as it goes*. Therefore, in our present stage of development, since the intellect is clearer and more luminous than 'feeling,' since also, with proper training and watchfulness, it is able to eliminate or allow for the 'personal' element to a considerable extent, and since lastly it can recognise and detect preconceptions, prejudices, imperfect premises and faulty reasonings, it seems to me that the whole resources of the intellect must *first of all* be brought to bear upon these 'feelings,' 'convictions' and so forth, which claim to be real 'intuitions,' in order to clarify, purge and test them as by fire, *before* one accepts them as in any sense valid 'intuitions,' or even as reliable signposts indicating direction, or as symbols which are the outworking of the true super-intellectual intuition into the sphere of our ordinary consciousness.

No doubt there is a certain risk that in doing this one may starve or even stifle the growth of this form of intuition.

But if one cultivates love, unselfishness, impersonality, and is always on one's guard against the special weaknesses of the intellect, pride, arrogance, narrowness, coldness, hardness, that danger can be avoided without undue difficulty, while the growth and development of the higher intuition is, I am firmly convinced, much better promoted or helped by such an effort, than by simply accepting blindly, without adequate testing and trial, whatever our 'feelings' may dictate, or whatever 'conviction' we may find has taken possession of us.

It was said above that, perhaps, one may find more frequent examples of this kind of intuition among women than among men. Personally I believe this to be the case, not only from experience, but also for the following reasons. By all testimony the life of a true woman is very much more largely a *life of feeling* than is a man's. The old saying: "a woman lives by her heart, a man by his brain," expresses, I think, an actual psychological truth—whatever modifications may ultimately result from the modern feminist movements, from higher education, suffragette campaigns, and the rest. Now the life of the heart, of the feelings, is very closely and intimately connected, I believe, with that feeling of unity, that feeling and sense of being at one with a thing, of experiencing it, as it were, from *inside* instead of from without, which I have described as the specially characteristic mark of super-intellectual intuition or perception.

To express what I mean most tersely, it will be convenient to use the ordinary Theosophical terminology. In this phrasing, then, one aspect of the Buddhic life is that special form of direct perception or intuition of things *from inside*, from within themselves, from a position, as it were, of *oneness* with their own proper life, which I have called above 'super-intellectual' intuition. Now the life of feeling, of the heart, in our ordinary experience is the *reflection*, as it were, of the Buddhic life on the astral plane or in the astral body. And

the two are most intimately connected, acting and reacting on each other continually. Moreover the Buddhic life is far more directly and powerfully acted upon and stimulated by the higher emotions and feelings, than it is by the activities of the mind or the intellect.

It may be well to observe, *en passant*, that apart from all Theosophical theories or psychic 'revelations,' what has just been said is true *psychologically*, true as matter of fact observation and experience, whatever terms and phrases may be used to express the facts. I have put it above in Theosophical language, as the most terse and easy way to convey what I mean; but I could equally have worked out and shown the same thing while employing ordinary language and current psychological terminology. Only it would have taken several extra pages to do so, and this paper has already reached its appointed length; so I had better resume the subject at this point in my next article.

S. T.

( *To be continued.* )

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### STRAY NOTES.

With this number we enter on our third year. The second year has in some ways been less successful than the first; our financial position is not so good, partly because the number of subscribers has been fewer, partly owing to the lowering of the subscription. We hope, therefore, that such of our readers as find the magazine at all interesting or useful, will do all in their power to help us in placing it on a sound basis by introducing it to as many of their friends as they can. In the matter of regularity and punctuality we have had even more trouble than during the first year, and the exceedingly late appearance of the last number has made it impossible to continue our former arrangements; so we have placed the work in the hands of another Press. Our expenses will be slightly heavier in consequence, but we have every reason to hope that the quality of the work will be better, and that the magazine will be ready at the proper time.

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One of our Italian readers, the Marchioness Lomellini and Tabarca, who is evidently a great lover of our younger brothers in the animal kingdom, asks us to give expression to her abhorrence of the practice of vivisection, and to her hope that "all Theosophists do their best to suppress vivisection."

We ourselves share her feeling with regard to this practice, which also, for various reasons, we believe to be of very little, if any, *real* use in the discovery of truth or the fight with disease. We fully recognise that those who practise and uphold it do so in what they believe to be the interests of humanity, and with the conviction that it is justifiable for the lower forms of life to be sacrificed for the sake of the higher. We are doubtful, however, whether the conditions are such that the end in view can at all be attained; they are not only abnormal, but are associated with a certain degree of fear and pain and general emotional disturbance, which, to the uninitiated, would seem certain to interfere with the result.

At the same time we would remind our correspondent that the extremely broad platform on which any Theosophical organisation must rest, necessarily leaves its members entirely free in their attitude towards these subjects; and while to many vivisection seems inconsistent with the principle of universal brotherhood, there are others, no less devoted to the ideal of brotherhood, to whom it does not appear so. The subject has many aspects which leave room for great variety of opinion.

We should not forget, also, that vivisection is but one of many practices which must be greatly deplored by all lovers of animals. Are not the horrors of the slaughter-house as great as those of the vivisection-chamber? Are not many of the feathers and furs worn by some ladies of fashion obtained only at the cost of the greatest cruelty? And what about the ill-treatment of beasts of burden which is constantly going on around us? There are many directions in which reform is sadly needed, and if we wish to carry on a successful crusade against cruelty to animals, we should be consistent, and, wherever it is possible, refrain from all animal products the obtaining of which causes suffering. Anti-vivisectionists, who are not also vegetarians, can hardly expect their opinions to have much weight! But the subject is a very large one, of the greatest importance, and full of suggestiveness, and is more suitable for an article than for a few stray notes. Will not some of our readers take it up, and send us their views in the form of an article?

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# THE PILGRIM.

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## ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS.

St. John of the Cross was born on June 24th, 1542, at Hontiveros in Spain. His father belonged to a noble family of old Castile, but his mother was early left a widow and in great poverty. From his earliest years he appears to have been deeply religious and very studious, and, as soon as he was old enough, he attended the Jesuit College at Medina, where he studied the writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, especially those of St. Thomas Aquinas. At the age of twenty-one he was admitted into the Order of Carmelites, and joined the monastery of St. Anne of Medina.

But the original rule had been much mitigated by Papal bulls, and the friars had become lax and worldly. St. John soon found that the Carmelites could not give him what he desired, the strict rule which should be a daily and hourly mortification of the lower nature, and the deep seclusion in which alone, so he thought, his soul might find her way up the steep slopes of Mount Carmel. He therefore decided to leave the Carmelites, and become a Carthusian, an order strictly enclosed.

This was in 1567, five years after St. Theresa had founded her first nunnery of the Reform, and at the moment when, hoping to extend the Reform to the monks, she was eagerly seeking for a few friars who should form the first monastery. She heard of St. John through a friend, and with a good deal of difficulty induced him to come to see her. As soon as she saw him, she knew that he was the man she was looking for,—she wrote of him to a friend soon after that “though he is but a little man, I believe him to be great in the sight of God”—and, before he left her, had persuaded him to give up the idea of becoming a Carthusian and to help her instead to reform the Carmelites. In due course he and another friar (St. Theresa called them her friar and a half !) founded the first monastery of the Reform at Duruelo, and formally renouncing the Mitigated Rule, he lived here, and ever after, until his death twenty-three years later, under the strict rule and in the absolute poverty required by the new order.

It was not only St. Theresa who was impressed by St. John ; he seems to have been of those who impress themselves strongly on all with whom they come in contact. It certainly was not his outer form—that was small and insignificant, and somewhat sickly. But, as St. Theresa saw, he had a soul like a flame, which seemed to burn ever brighter and brighter within the outer covering. The more one knows him, the more he reminds one, with his absolute purity and intense devotion, of a white flame ; and, like a flame too, he is illusive, intangible, with a curious impersonal aloofness, which is a striking contrast to the vivid, human warmth of St. Theresa. But this strange aloofness did not prevent him from having an extraordinary insight into human nature, an insight born of sympathy and love. He was an ideal Master of Novices, showing an intimate understanding of each individual, which struck his contemporaries as plainly miraculous, guiding his spiritual children through the dark, and

difficult places with unfailing help and tender encouragement ; or, on the rare occasions when he deemed it necessary, not hesitating to sternly reprimand. The authorities soon discovered this gift of his, and placed him in positions where he could exercise it, also sending him on several occasions to restore order in convents which had become dissatisfied and unruly, and which under his firm yet gentle rule were quickly restored to a better frame of mind.

Many charming stories are told of his tender helpfulness, his undaunted faith, his great humility, his cheerfulness under persecution and suffering, for which there is no space in a paper like this. In 1577 he fell a victim to the bitter persecution which the Carmelites of the Mitigated Rule were carrying on against the new order, and was imprisoned for eight months at Toledo in a dark and airless cell, from which he escaped, according to his pious biographers, by miraculous means. Thirteen years later he again suffered persecution, this time from those members of his own order who had already fallen from the high ideals of St. Theresa. He was deprived of all office, and during the last months of his life was sent to a monastery, the prior of which bore him an undying grudge for a reprimand which it had been St. John's duty to administer to him when a novice many years before. In spite of the fact that St. John was already suffering from his last illness, an illness of the most painful description, the prior treated him with the greatest harshness, and it was only a short time before his death that his friends were able to intervene. This treatment caused his friends deep distress, but to St. John himself his sufferings seemed to be a matter of indifference, if they did not give him positive pleasure, and nothing seemed to alter his radiant serenity. The day before his death he himself for the last time went through the experience which he has described so wonderfully, and the Dark Night of deepest desolation closed down,

on his soul. But in a few hours it passed away, and those who watched him saw the joy and serenity come back to his face, while a brilliant light shone round his head. It was in the first hours of the next day, when the convent bells were ringing for matins, that the great soul left the little body, and went, as he said himself, to sing matins in Paradise.

The chief writings of St. John are *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* and *The Dark Night of the Soul*, two books both written in 1578, which are intended to supplement each other but which as a matter of fact overlap each other to a considerable extent, and neither of which is finished. He also wrote many years later an explanation or commentary on the *Spiritual Canticle of the Soul*, a poem composed while he was in prison in Toledo, which is itself a paraphrase of the *Song of Solomon*. There also exist several letters, poems, instructions *etc.*, none of which, as far as I know, have been translated into English.

The books of St. John treat of the Inner Way and are written for the sole purpose of guiding others up the steep ascent, the summit and goal of which is the Divine Union. Though written quite impersonally,—he only once, and that indirectly, refers to himself and his own experiences—one cannot read a single page without feeling convinced that they are written by one who knew, who had himself travelled very far along that road. He taught that the only way to attainment lay through the Dark Night, and that the way itself was marked by four stages. He says, "Souls begin to enter this Dark Night when God proceeds to lead them from the state of beginners, proper to those who meditate on the spiritual road, and begins to set them in that of the progressives, which is at length that of the contemplatives"\* (elsewhere he

\* The quotations in this article are from *The Dark Night of the Soul*, translated by Mrs. Cunningham Graham, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, and *A Spiritual Canticle*, translated by David Lewis.

calls them the illuminated) "to the end that, passing through this state, they may reach that of the perfect, which is the Divine Union of the soul with God."

Before going on to what St. John says about the Dark Night, I should like to touch quite briefly on his views on visions, and similar experiences. A considerable part of the *Ascent of Mount Carmel* is devoted to this subject, and he describes and analyses the different kinds minutely and carefully, pointing out the many pitfalls which beset the unwary along this road. But he does so solely, he explains, for the helping of those to whom such visions come, and for the guidance of their confessors. His own opinion on the whole matter is that the soul should under all circumstances and at all times turn away from such things; for, if the visions are false, it will then have escaped a great danger; if true, the grace which they bring and for which alone they are to be valued, will help and bless the soul just as much if it turns away and refuses to dwell on the form through which it came.

St. John divides the Dark Night into two, to correspond with the two divisions of the soul. He says:—"This night ... produces in the spiritually-minded two sorts of darkness or purgations, answering to the two parts of man, that is to say, the sensitive and spiritual. And this, the first night or sensitive purgation, is that wherein the soul purges and strips herself naked of all things of sense, by conforming the senses to the spirit; and the next is the spiritual night or purgation, wherein the soul purges and denudes herself of all mental activity, by conforming and disposing the intellect for the union of love with God. The sensitive is usual and happens to many, ... the spiritual purgation is gone through by very few, and those only who have been proved and tried. The first night ... is bitter and terrible to the sense. The second transcends all description, because it is exceeding fearsome for the spirit, as we presently shall show."

He speaks first of the first night, wherein is purged the sensitive soul. Under this term he includes the body and the exterior senses ; the desires and passions ; the interior senses of memory, fancy and imagination ; everything, in fact, which a Theosophist would include in the physical, astral and lower mental. He speaks with great insight and acuteness of the difficulties and temptations which beset beginners, according to their character and temperament ; of the pride which finds vent in a vain desire to speak of spiritual things and even at times to teach rather than to learn ; the self-complacency which prompts a beginner to change his confessor if he thinks that he is not properly appreciated, and which leads him, if he have ecstasies, to have them in public rather than in private ; the spiritual avarice which is never content with what God sends of light and comfort, but always demands more. There are those who make too light of their faults, and those who are too discouraged when they fail, not out of humility, but because they had hoped that they were saints and find that they are not. And there are others who become not humble but impatient when they find that they are not going to become saints in a day, although he adds "some show so much patience and proceed so slowly in this matter of wishing to improve, that God were fain to see less in them!" All these imperfections are to be purged away in this night, the entrance on which leads the soul from the state of the beginner to that of the progressive. It is taken for granted that the soul which has reached this point has already made considerable progress along the path of ordinary virtue, and has arrived at the stage where it finds delight and comfort in meditation and prayer. God, says St. John, treats beginners as a mother does her young child, carrying them as it were in his arms, and causing them without any effort of their own, to find great delight in spiritual exercises and in long hours of prayer "until they have become detached from

worldly things and have acquired some spiritual strength in God." But before they can attain to spiritual manhood they must enter the night in which all these delights and comforts are withdrawn. The feelings of rapture and devotion to which they are accustomed are swept away by the dryness and aridness which now enfold the soul. There is no comfort to be got by spiritual intercourse, by the reading of holy books, by meditation. The power of meditation on images is in fact wholly withdrawn, and God "leaves them in darkness so profound that they know not whither to direct the sense of the imagination and speculations of the mind. For they cannot take a single step towards meditation, as before they were wont, the interior sense being now submerged in this night and made so barren, that not only find they no substance and delight in spiritual matters and good practices, wherein they were wont to rejoice and find relish, but, on the contrary, in its place a nauseous savour and bitterness." They think "that spiritual goodness has deserted them and that God has forsaken them, since they find no support nor delight in any good thing." The reason of this is that "God begins to communicate himself to the soul no longer through the senses as he did before, by means of the mental combination and analysis of their own ideas by the reasoning and discursive faculties, but in pure spirit, wherein there is no consecutive exercise of intellectual thought; ... He communicates himself to her in an act of absolute contemplation, whereto the exterior and interior senses of the lower part cannot reach." "The method they must abide by in this night of the senses, is, to be utterly indifferent as to mental exercise and meditation, ... and, being satisfied with a loving and restful waiting upon God, devoid of all solicitude, activity, and excessive longing to feel and taste Him, they shall indeed accomplish a great matter." "Such is ... the night and purgation of the sense. The which, in those who



are afterwards destined to enter upon the next more grievous night of the spirit, in order to pass to the divine union of love with God ... is usually accompanied by grave sensitive trials and temptations which last a long time, although longer in the case of some than of others." When the soul is thus mortified, purified, or strengthened, it comes "forth to commence the journey and highway of the spirit, which is that of the advanced, which, by another name, is called the Road of Illumination or of Infused Contemplation, whereby God ... proceeds to nourish and re-mould her unimpeded by any mental disquisition or active help or industry on the part of the soul herself."

After an interval of rest and peace, which varies in length according to the individual, the soul, if worthy, is led on to the second night.

"This dark night is an influence from God upon the soul, which purges her of her ignorance and habitual imperfections, natural and spiritual, ... wherein God teaches the soul in secret and instructs her in the perfect love, all act on her part being limited to fixing her attention lovingly on God, listening to his voice, and receiving the light he sends, without knowing what manner of thing this infused contemplation is."

"But the doubt presents itself, why does the soul apply such a term as dark night to the Divine Light, which, as we say, illuminates and purges her of her blindness? Whereto it is answered, that in respect of two considerations, this Divine Wisdom is not only night and darkness for the soul, but also pain and torment. The first is by reason of the attitude of the Divine Wisdom, which exceeds the comprehension of the soul, and is therefore dark as night to her. The second because of her own baseness and impurity, and therefore it is to her noisome and grievous, and also dark." "When this Divine Light of Contemplation seizes upon the soul which, as yet, is not

entirely ... illuminated it shrouds her in spiritual darkness, for not only does it transcend her powers, but also obscures and deprives her of the action of her natural intelligence." "When ... this Divine Light reverberates upon her, ... she feels herself so impure and wretched that it seems to her that God is against her and that she has become God's enemy." Also "she is haunted by the sense of being forsaken and despised of all created people and things, particularly of her friends." But "what torments her most is the fear that she will never be worthy and that all her gains are for ever destroyed." It seems to her that God has put "a cloud before her eyes on purpose that no prayer of hers shall pierce it," and that He has "placed her in a darkness as of those that have been long dead." "Even so must she dwell in this sepulchre of darkest death, if she would awake to the spiritual resurrection that awaits her."

If this purgation "is to be a durable and lasting matter, howsoever great its severity, it endures for some years; it being understood that during them, there are intermissions and alleviations, in which by the dispensation of God this obscure contemplation ceases to afflict the soul after a purgative mode and fashion, but comes to her illuminatively and lovingly, wherein, like a prisoner escaped from so noisome a dungeon and bondage, and set in the refreshment of peace and liberty, she tastes and feels to the full great suavity of peace and loving friendship with God, with easy abundance of spiritual intercourse. The which is to the soul a sign of the salvation that the said purgation is working in her, ... and a presage of the abundance that awaits her. And this even, at times, to such a degree, that at last the soul thinks that all her trials are fairly ended. For spiritual things in the soul are of this nature, when they are most purely spiritual; that when her trials return she thinks that she shall never escape therefrom, and that now indeed there is an end

to all her treasures ; ... and when her spiritual treasures are renewed, she likewise thinks that her labours are over, and that her treasures will never again fail her."

"It remains thus here to declare that this blissful night, although it casts the spirit into darkness, does so solely in order to enlighten it in all things ; and although it humbles and abases it, it is solely in order to exalt and give it freedom ; and although it impoverishes and empties it of all natural possessions and affections, it is solely to enable it to stretch divinely forth to full enjoyment and delight in all things whether of heaven or earth, in the absolute possession of an all-embracing liberty of spirit in all things." "Profound and vast is this battle and combat, since the peace that awaits her shall be most deep ; and the grief is internal and rarefied and searching, because the love she shall in time possess must also be most internal and searching."

"But directly she has been purged by the knowledge of, and sorrow for her sins, her eyes shall be opened and display to her the graces of this light divine ; and all these shadows and imperfections of the soul being expelled and removed, the great benefits and mercies she had gradually reaped in this blessed night shall at length come into view, so that, by slow degrees, she shall know and recognise them." Then the intellect is enlightened "with supernatural light, so that the human mind be made divine, united with the Divine. And, in precisely the same way, doth He inflame the will with divine love, after such sort that the will at length is not less than divine, loving no less than divinely, welded and united in one with the Divine will and love ; and the memory the same, and the inclinations and appetites all likewise changed to the image of God, divinely. And thus this soul shall at length be a heavenly soul, celestial, and more divine than human. All which, as will have been clearly evident by what we have said, God gradually works and performs in the soul by means

of this night, shedding His light upon her, and making her flame up divinely with longings for Him alone, and for no other thing beside."

"In this way, by this Mystical Theology and Secret Love doth the soul go, going forth from all things and from herself, and mounting to God. For love is like to fire, which ever leaps upward, with desire to be engulfed in the centre of its sphere." "For love alone it is that unites and joins the soul with God."

The wisdom which the soul now attains to is called the Secret Wisdom, because, not only doth the soul not understand it, but no one does, not even the devil himself. Forasmuch as the Master who teaches it dwells substantially within her. And not on this account alone may it be called secret, but also by reason of the effects it works upon the soul. For not only is this Secret Wisdom secret when it purges the soul in the darkness and affliction of the purification because she herself is utterly at a loss as to how to describe it; but likewise after she has been illuminated, when this wisdom has been communicated to her more clearly and with greater distinctness, does it remain so hidden from her discernment and capacity to refer to it by any name, that apart from the invincible repugnance the soul feels to speak of it, she finds no way or mode, nor adequate simile, capable of expressing ... a knowledge so transcendent and a spiritual sensation so delicate and infused." "For ... the soul that will draw near unto God must do so by not comprehending, rather than by comprehending; it must change the changeable and the comprehensible for the unchangeable and incomprehensible."

In speaking of the Divine Union, St. John mentions two stages. In the first, that of the illuminated, the moments of union are intermittent only, "divine touches" as he beautifully describes them. This stage he calls that of spiritual

betrothal and says that it "consists of a certain contact of the soul with the Divinity, and it is God Himself who then is felt and tasted, though not manifestly and distinctly, as it will be in glory. But this touch of knowledge and of sweetness is so strong and so profound that it penetrates into the inmost substance of the soul." "Such is the sweetness and deep delight of these touches of God, that one of them is more than a recompense for the sufferings of this life, however great their number." "Sometimes when the soul least thinks of it, and when it least desires it, God touches it divinely, causing certain recollections of Himself. Sometimes too the divine touches are sudden, occurring even when the soul is occupied with something else, and that occasionally of trifling moment. They are also so sensible and efficacious that at times they make not only the soul, but also the body, to tremble. At other times they come gently, without any agitation whatever, accompanied by a deep sense of delight and spiritual refreshing "

Through this stage the soul at length attains to that of the Perfect, which St. John calls the Spiritual Marriage, and in which the union is continuous and unbroken. Of this state, he says:—"I speak but little, ... not willing to leave it altogether untouched, though no language can describe it." In order to attain to "a state of perfection so high as this, ... the soul that aims at it must not only be purified and cleansed from all imperfections ... , but it must also have great courage and most exalted love for so strong and close an embrace of God. For in this state the soul not only attains to exceeding pureness and beauty but also acquires a terrible strength by reason of that strict and close bond which in this union binds it to God." "What God communicates to the soul in this intimate union is utterly ineffable, beyond the reach of all possible words—just as it is impossible to speak of God Himself so as to convey any idea of what He is—

because it is God Himself who communicates Himself to the soul now in the marvellous bliss of its transformation. In this state God and the soul are united, as ... coal with the fire, or the light of the stars with that of the sun ; yet, however, not so essentially and completely as it will be in the life to come."

For St. John says that at this stage the union is continuous and unbroken only so far as the substance and essence of the soul is concerned. The union of the powers and faculties of the soul, though very frequent, is not and cannot be permanent and continuous in this life.

That permanent union of the soul and all its powers can only be attained in the life to come, when "united with the Divine Wisdom, it will then understand the deep mysteries of God and man, which are the highest wisdom hidden in God." That is the Beatific Vision, when at length the last veil is swept away, and the soul sees God face to face.

FREDA EARDLEY-WILMOT.

"The gates of knowledge, of Divine Wisdom, are all carefully guarded and zealously watched, and every one has to fight his way.... You ask me for the weapons, wherewith to oppose the enemy—why, do you not know what these weapons are ? Remember our *Bhagavadgītā*, remember *Light on the Path*, and you are well equipped. Suppress *Ahañkāra*, kill out the self, find out the Warrior within thee, and take thy orders from Him. Thus victory is sure to be thine, for the Warrior within thee cannot err. He is all-wise, all-seeing, all-powerful. Sword cannot slay Him, fire cannot burn, water cannot plunge, Imperishable He, Unchangeable He, Eternal He. Thrice blessed be His name. Have no will of thine own, surrender thyself wholly and absolutely to Him, and thou art safe...Allow not the little, but vain ego to raise its head...but make it subservient to the Divine, make it realise that it is only an instrument which the Divine has created for His own purpose, and that in complete devotion alone lies its well-being, and you vanquish the enemy, which is but a bubble in time and space, a figment of the 'I', the false 'I'."

( From *On the Threshold* )

## BHAKTI IN HINDUISM.

### III. THE KARMA BHUMI (LAND OF KARMA).

(Continued from p. 58).

It now remains to consider the full significance of the word *Karma Bhûmi* in its association with the land of India. It implies in the first place a privilege, an attribute by which this land stands permanently and effectually differentiated from all other soil in the universe. Wherein lies the significance of this privilege? We must try to grasp fully the fundamental difference in the *kârmic* functions exercised respectively by the *Karma Bhûmi* and the *Bhoga Bhûmi*. In the inscrutable design of Providence the machinery of *karma* is dual. The first part discharges the function of *creation*, which is assigned to a certain limited area of land. The second part discharges the function of *assimilation*, which is assigned to a soil incomparably vast in area and variety. The creative function of *karma* in its higher constructive aspect is most arduous, and demands intense concentration and heavy sacrifices, and will be touched upon presently. The fruition of *karma*—of that *karma* which carries the *jîva* aloft into the higher spiritual *lokas*—suberves a double beneficent purpose in the economy of human evolution. It gives rest to the harassed and wearied spirit; it pours the balm of recuperation into the jaded and numbed and recalcitrant body; it relieves its abnormal tenseness, and rejuvenates its creative potencies. And it does what is unquestionably a much higher, more enduring and more valuable work. The raw, crude, unhewn blocks of energy which the creative wheel has liberated, it

polishes and organises and coaxes to assume a marvellous variety of exquisite forms. In the benignant and fructifying sky of the *Bhoga Bhûmi*, the land of fruition, it becomes plastic, liquid, limpid, kinetic, it vivifies and nourishes the whole body, it is built into permanent faculties—it is, in other words, entirely, effectually, permanently assimilated. Such, in brief, is the function, in the evolution of *karma*, of the regions to which nature has assigned the rôle of *Bhoga Bhûmi*.

The function of the *Karma Bhûmi*—the creative function—is radically different, and, in the creation of higher *karma*, intensely, bafflingly arduous. The creation of higher *karma* is, in its final analysis, the creation of higher energy. The creation of higher energy is the transmutation of energy from lower into higher forms; it is a process of suppressing or contracting the range of its lower manifestation, and driving it upward and inward into higher manifestation. It is the creation, the vivification, in the body, of a *chakra*, or permanent centre, in order to give permanence, continuity, cohesion, effectiveness to these manifestations.

Now this is, in the nature of things, a formidable task. All higher *karma*, from creation to maturity, passes through a triple stage of growth in the three *gunas*, *tamas*, *rajas*, *sattva*. *Sattva-guna* is the limit of maturity at which assimilation is fruitful, wholesome, and harmonious. But the progress to *sattva-guna*—the stage of assimilation—is guarded by the stronghold of *tamoguna* and *rajoguna*, in which nature offers prolonged and desperate resistance.

The great offensive weapon of *tamas* is inertia. The inertia which nature opposes to the evolution of higher energy is appalling in mass and intensity. It requires a brooding concentration, a dauntless resolution, an unflinching spirit of sacrifice, which excite tragic awe mingled with comic pathos. Who does not know that S'ukrâchâryya inhaled corn smoke during one thousand *deva* (three hundred and sixty



thousand human) years, and that upon Vâlmîki's body there grew anthills?

The offensive weapon of *rajas* is temptation. To the beneficent creative energy of nature, it is a faithless ally. From it come all new creations, from the mechanical human habit to the magnificent spiritual faculty. But from it also come all temptations, from the venial pilfering to the abduction of *Sîtâ*. The student of the *Purâna* will recall to mind the story of the *Rishi* who yielded himself to the voluptuous embrace of *Urvas'î*, the most beautiful *apsarâ* of *Indra's* court, and to whose ravished and intoxicated mind one hundred *deva* years seemed but three mortal hours!

Such are the sacrifices which the creation of higher *karma* demands—such the risks and perils which perpetually dog its footsteps. In the drama of human evolution this arduous creative *rôle* has been assigned by Providence to India. And this deep-seated and organic difference in function between India and the other *lokas* of the universe must naturally be presumed to create a similar difference in environment and constitution. The peculiarity which distinguishes the Indian soil from all other lands, whether on this or other planes, is the presence in its constitution, physical and spiritual, of a quivering sea of creative impulse. The land, from the Himâlaya to Comorin, and from Chittagong to Peshâwar, is saturated with a creative electricity which thrills through its ambient aura. The great swelling keynote to which life in the land moves is creativeness. It is present as the supreme resurgent impulse in human bodies which are born with Eastern heredity. And it broods upon external and inanimate nature. It exists as a mysterious, invisible and ever-present influence, in river and forest and desert, on hill and dale and sea-shore. The whole country is one gigantic vortex of creativeness, divided and sub-divided into innumerable vortices of varying creative potencies.

These are votive offerings from creative *I's'varas*, *Devas*, and known and unknown *Rishis*, to 'orphan' humanity. The root principle which presides over and consecrates human evolution is sacrifice. It is a golden chain which begins at humanity, and ends in Divinity. Without the constant sacrifice of devoted bands of invisible Helpers, who work unthanked and unknown, the drama of human progress would be a sombre tragedy. Man left alone would vegetate, and would soon degenerate. Sacrifice protects, and in many instances actually saves, unsuspecting humanity from hosts of unseen dangers. It brings within reach joy, hope, incentive ideal, inspiration, light. It arrests, disorganises, disperses the forces of evil ; it strengthens, organises, concentrates, imparts added cohesion and increased mobility to the forces of good. It starves, and fasts, and keeps vigil ; it suffers, and slaves, and tortures the body, in order, atom by atom, to create and store spiritual energy, so that it may assuage suffering and spread light.

And so in India, the land of higher *karma*, man has not been abandoned to grope, amid uncertain and wasteful expenditure of energy, into blunder and pain. Help, spontaneous, warm, wakeful, beneficent, is ever ready, wherever there may be need for it. In this *Karma Bhûmi* the need of it is clamant and persistent, for, as we have seen elsewhere, the vivification of higher spiritual energy is a work of tremendous strain, which sometimes breaks the body, and unhinges the reason. And so divine compassion and human sacrifice have, from the beginning of creation, flowed in life-giving streams to this land, and brought youth to the decrepit body, and light to the reeling brain. The highest spiritual forces have always converged to this land as their common centre. The devoted labours of creative *I's'varas*, *Devas*, and *Rishis* have left behind monuments of Their sacrifice, some of which, although decadent, retain to this day a fragment of

their original sanctity. Such are the *tīrthas*—a characteristic institution of the religion of the Hindu.

In the *tīrthas* have been stored, by compassion which never sleeps and labour which never wearies, the highest and holiest influences. In the first three *Yugas*—*Satya*, *Tretā* and *Dvāpara*—humanity enjoyed them in their undiluted purity. With the approach of *Kali* the higher *tīrthas* have left the physical plane and retreated into the higher *lokas*. In the few struggling and decadent survivors, life manifests in feeble and intermittent pulsations, preparatory to complete extinction. In the foul and poisonous atmosphere of rank materiality and rampant unbelief which the spirit of *Kali* fosters, spirituality can never thrive.

But in those far-off dreamy days, the *tīrthas* were living centres of the highest creative and palliative influences. The whole country was mapped into divisions, each division placed under the protection of a network of *tīrthas*, and into each *tīrtha* was poured a ceaseless stream of holiest magnetism which was tapped by the suitor for divine grace. We may trace in their organisation a triple purpose, corresponding to the three distinctive types of relief they bestowed. First, there were, at the top, outshining all in the splendour of their majesty, accessible only to the *adhikāri*, the qualified, those which bestowed liberation, *mukti*. Would the armchair Philistine, nurtured in the materialistic science of the West, and breathing the insidious poison of *Kali* in the East, believe it credible that there were *tīrthas* which gave liberation? And yet such was the fact. The tradition which has gathered round Kāś'ī as the centre of the highest form of *mukti* (*sayujā* or absolute union with the *Devā*) is to this day a living power in the land. Besides Kāś'ī, there were scores of other *tīrthas* which existed for the purpose of giving liberation.

To the second class belong those *tīrthas* which were created with a view to afford release from the effects of out-

raged physical and moral law—from deafness, blindness, leprosy, insanity, obsession by *Rākshasas* and others, from every variety and type of insidious, appalling, loathsome, incurable visitations. In some cases the relief came with a quickness which was dramatic in its surprises, in others it was slow.

Lastly, there was a distinct class of *tīrthas* which took the dead weight from off *karma* and gave a free scope to the desires—which bestowed upon the happy suitor health, wealth, beauty, husband, wife, child; kingdom, possessions, the twenty-one *lokas* of *Svarga*; aye, the luxury of revenge! In the unfathomed depths of the mind, there does not lie a single effective desire, which was not carried by the *tīrthas* straightway into fulfilment.

Exceedingly brief and condensed as the above account of the *tīrthas* is, what a remarkable picture of India does it present! What must have been their mass and volume, what their perennial flow! From a common desire at one end to *mukti* at the other is a far cry. Between these two extremes in those glorious days, there was absolutely nothing which could not be had from the *tīrtha*.

The *tīrtha* was a centre of creative energy in an allied sense, which has been touched upon in another chapter. It assisted in the creation of higher *karma*, which is dependent on one essential condition, *viz*, a complete and full adjustment of lower *karma* in respect of both its assets and its liabilities. The *tīrtha* gave a full discharge of its liabilities by guaranteeing an absolute release from sin. This remission of *kārmic* liabilities on the lower had the effect of releasing energy for constructive work on the higher planes of nature.

In India the traditional spots of *tapas*, where some creative *I's'vara* or *His* Consort, or a high Sage had received enlightenment, are reckoned as the highest *tīrthas*. Traces of Their august presence can still be felt by the sensitive

soul in the serenity and sanctity which reign in their neighbourhood. Like the *tīrthas* proper, they are reservoirs of the holiest creative magnetism.

From the *S'iva Purāṇam* (*Vāyaviya Samhita*, Part I. Chap. II.) we obtain glimpses of a mystery which shows the creative impulses at work in a different field. One of the holiest spots in India, round which cluster the most kindling and imperishable associations, is the forest of *Naimisha*. Here met, to celebrate sacrifices, or give or hear the exposition of occult wisdom, the brightest stars in the Indian spiritual sky. Here originated the immortal literature of the *Purāṇa*. And how was it that the Forest of *Naimisha* was at once the greatest and the most populous resort of the intelligence and spirituality of India? Because the voice of the Divine had pronounced it to be a most eligible spot for *tapas*, because within its magical area the mind principle was charmed into impotence.

This is the mysterious occult virtue which resided in the spot. The spiritual influences with which the whole forest of *Naimisha* was filled possessed a special property which was remarkable. It tended to the dissolution, or, at any rate, the quiescence of the mind. There were some *tīrthas*, such as Kās'i, which bestowed *mukti*. There were others which bestowed remission of unexhausted physical *karma*. The forest of *Naimisha* produced an allied effect, not so much particular as general and massive—within its boundaries the mind tended to shrink. That is to say, the spiritual influences at work in the forest of *Naimisha*, acting directly upon the mind, tended effectually to extinguish its stock of *sanchita* (collected, stored) and *kriyamāna* (in course of creation) *karma*. It is *prārabdha* (in course of fruiting) *karma* which is worked into effect in any single incarnation. It is *sanchita* and *kriyamāna karma* which provides fuel to the machinery, gives vigour and animation to its parts, and is the secret of

their continued longevity. The extinction of these latter classes of *karma* means therefore the consequent shrinkage of the organ, and along with it the body, concerned in the creation of *karma*. And so in the forest of *Naimisha* the mind principle naturally gravitated to extinction.

The mystery of the forest of *Naimisha* is extraordinarily suggestive. It shows how environment in India acts in extinguishing or transforming the lower principles of man. And it naturally suggests that there may have existed, in those blessed days, other spots, as magnificently endowed, which gave similar or nobler relief to the benighted pilgrim.

The same authority (*S'iva Purāṇam*) elsewhere (*Vidyas'vara Samhita*, Chap. XIII), in very definite and precise words, enunciates a law of the distribution, in varying ratio, of the creative influence throughout the land. For want of a better term we may call it the law of creative progression. Assuming the existence, throughout the entire organism of the soil, of the creative influence, it shows how this influence deepens in volume and intensity of creative power in an ascending ratio of ten, as the environment or rather the locality shifts from one spot to another. The law is so strange and remarkable, and withal possesses such immense practical importance, that it deserves to be stated in full.

For the purpose of this law, then, a *room* in which the prescribed rules of purity have been observed gives the unit of effect. That is to say, in such a room, from, say, a sacrifice celebrated in propitiation of a *Deva*, or any other like action performed, the effect which in due course follows is said to be just equal—in kind and degree, volume and depth, it exactly measures its cause, is neither more nor less.

The same action or actions performed in a *cowpen* give tenfold increased effect.

On any *water-side* the same effect gains another tenfold increase in volume and depth. That is to say, the spiritual

effect of any action performed on a *water-side* is one hundred-fold as powerful as in a room in which the usual conditions of purity obtain.

Now, let us take in succession the neighbourhood of a *vilva* (wood apple) or a *tulasî* or an *as'vattha* tree (peepul); the temple of a *Deva*; a *tîrtha*; a river; a river that is a *tîrtha*; rivers that bear the name of seven Ganges (*viz.*, Gangâ, Godâvari, Kâveri, Tamraparnika, Sindhu or Indus, Saryu and Revâ); sea-shore; mountain-top. The authority we are quoting says that at each of these successive spots the effect of the action deepens in a continuously ascending ratio of ten.

On looking into the above chart we find that at the lower end of it is a *room* of ordinary purity, and that at its upper end, being eleventh in the order of succession from the first, is a *mountain-top*. According to the law of progression we are considering, the effect of an action performed—a *mantra* told—at the first place would just be unity, while at the last spot it would mount up to the gigantic and incredible ratio of ten multiplied ten times over,  $10 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10$ .

Now, the above is only one part of the law of creative progression, as we have styled it. It shows how physical environment—environment acting through *space*—aids in modifying the action of the creative impulse, in deepening the effect of this action indefinitely in the fixed ratio of ten.

The second part of the law shows how environment acting through *time* produces equally marvellous results. As regards this part of the law, the effect of an action performed by a person with a pure mind, on a day ordinarily considered auspicious, is just taken to be unity. If all the conditions of the action are satisfied, the effect which follows is just what the *S'âstra* says it should be, it is neither less nor more.

The same action performed on a day of *Solar Samkrânti*

(the day when the sun passes from one sign to another) gains tenfold in increased effect.

The effect increases in volume and depth ten times as much again if it is a day of *Vishva* (equatorial) *Samkrānti*.

Now, if we take in succession the two *A'yana* (*viz.* *Uttarāyana* and *Dakshināyana*) *Samkrāntis*; the *Mriga Samkrānti*; a lunar eclipse; a solar eclipse—the effect, says the authority from which we are quoting, goes on increasing in depth and volume in the ascending ratio of ten.

On a day of solar eclipse the amount of creative energy liberated by the sun is so great that no other planetary conjunction belonging to the class ordinary can at all equal, much less surpass it. On this sacred day the effect of action reaches the limit of fulness.

It is important to note, by the way that there are other planetary conjunctions, besides these, which occur once in thirty or even a hundred years, and which, on account of their rarity, are as much more powerful than a solar eclipse, as the latter is than a day of ordinary auspicious omens. For reasons which are too obvious to repeat, they are not expressly included in the law, nor is the ratio of their effect given, which it would be futile to measure in the niggardly digits of arithmetic.

The theory of the law of creative progression will remain incomplete without a glance at the action of the four *yugas* upon creative *karma*. The action of the *yugas*, like the action of planetary conjunctions noticed above, is the action of time, but with an immense difference. The action of planetary conjunctions, such as a *Samkrānti* or an eclipse, is at its best accidental. The action of the four successive *yugas* is, as said elsewhere, fundamental. It is independent of planetary combinations, persistently uniform, deep-seated, pervasive; it possesses the remorseless fixity of destiny; it bestrides like a Colossus the whole field of creative effort. Nothing human



can ever evade its silent and unseen influences. Even *dharmā*, as we have seen elsewhere, is not immune from its malign radiations.

In India, therefore, all causes and their effects—all *karma* and its fruits—are subject to a fundamental and fixed variation by the action of the *yugas*. In the benignant and serene sky of *Satya Yuga* all effects attain the maximum limit of fulness—in mathematical terminology all effects are unity. The collective action of *Tretā Yuga*, for the first time, rouses from their prolonged winter sleep the forces of inchoate resistance and frustration. Accordingly in *Tretā* all effects lose just one quarter of their efficacy. The spirit of *Dvāpara Yuga* adds another quarter to its spoils, so that in the troubled sky of this *yuga* charged with stormy elements, the efficacy of all effects sinks down to one half. The concentrated materiality of *Kali Yuga* practically sterilises it; for, as its dark and stormy spiritual night deepens, full three quarters of the efficacy of actions is gone, and before the *yuga* is half out, the feeble quarter effectiveness that is left to actions shrinks slowly, steadily, remorselessly, down to a bare eighth.

It will now be seen how intensely interesting is the law of creative progression, as we have called it, and what a significance it possesses as part of the wider doctrine of *Karma Bhūmi*. The *Purāṇas* speak of this soil as the land of *karma*, meaning thereby that in the infinity of *lokas* into which the universe is divided, the land of India is the predestined creative area of all higher destiny, including liberation; that in the whole universe there is no other centre wherein the seeds of higher *karma* can be sown, that in contradistinction to India, all the other *lokas* of the universe enjoy the correlated function of *Bhoga Bhūmi*, the land of enjoyment—the land under whose genial and fructifying sky the *kārmic* seeds sown in India bloom into ravishing enjoyment. The whole soil of India is a gigantic vortex of creative influences which

permeate hill and forest and river and plain, and act in accordance with a fixed law.

Such is a brief statement of the heart of the doctrine. To the intelligent and thoughtful student it must be obvious that it is one of those doctrines which tower high above others in solitary and unapproachable grandeur, which cast their light on everything, and invest everything with a new significance. In exactly the same relation the doctrine stands to *Bhakti Yoga*. Just as the tiny little insect seen through the microscope reveals new and unsuspected wonders, so *Bhakti Yoga* seen through the dazzling light which the doctrine of *Karma Bhûmi* concentrates upon it, reveals a strange and unlooked-for significance, a new purpose, a new goal. It is certain that without the vivific inspiration which the doctrine brings to the three paths to liberation, *bhakti* would miss its profound and soul-stirring significance. Let the aspirant to *bhakti* make a definite mental image of the fact that *bhakti* is one of the three eternal and immutable highways to liberation ; let him also realise what the doctrine of *Karma Bhûmi* has put in a clear, precise and concrete form before his mind, viz., that in India alone can liberation be won. He will then understand that the doctrine revolutionises the ordinary conception of *bhakti*, that it shatters into atoms the comfortable armchair ideas of it, and imparts to it an awful mobility.

Indeed it will radically and permanently alter the whole attitude of his mind. It will open his eyes. And he will understand that in this land of *karma*, *bhakti* is a living force ; that the creative influence with which the whole soil is saturated vivifies and invigorates it, redresses its lapses and eccentricities, and provides it with a fixed and definite orbit. He will understand that in India, the land of *karma*, *bhakti* is not an isolated nor a sterile force, that it does not dissipate its energies in mere emotional inanities, nor does it stiffen into hide-bound formalities ; but that it is ever linked to *mukti*

by a tie which is vital and indissoluble, and ever rises in limpid streams of love and adoration to the feet of the Beloved. He will understand that in this land of *karma*, *bhakti* has a divine mission, that five thousand years ago, in the ever memorable *Krishna Avatâra* the Lord re-animated it with the vital spark which it had all but lost in *Dvâpara* in order that in the ensuing *Kali Yuga* it might lead crowds of thirsty and benighted souls into light and peace. He will understand that in this land beloved of the *Devas bhakti* is fed from a perennial spring, and rests upon unseen but ever present divine guidance and protection ; that there are always present within its boundaries *bhaktas* whose life is a passionate adoration and perpetual *yajña*, who live unknown and unsuspected by the sceptical herd, who have seen the Beloved face to face. Their life replenishes the sacred oil of *bhakti* and keeps its torch burning.

Let the aspirant to *bhakti* bear in mind that to-day in this land the path of *bhakti* is a living path of release, that effort in the right direction is neither lost, dissipated nor diverted, that ceaseless and resolute striving for the light receives unseen encouragement, guidance and help.

It will thus be seen that the doctrine of *Karma Bhâmi* has an intrinsic importance of its own, although it has no direct connection with *bhakti*. It is only by its light that we can understand the peculiar significance which *bhakti* possesses in this land, and in this view its importance can by no means be overrated.

A PAURANIC STUDENT.

(*To be continued.*)

“‘One thing is needful’, said Christ to Mary, ‘and thou hast chosen it’. What was she doing ? She was sitting at His feet in love, and listening to His word. She was loving the best. That was life ; to look at the true Life and adore it. She had the one needful thing—all the rest was sure to follow. It is as simple as the day to love Christ’s character for what it is, with all our heart ; to love it with as much ardour as one loves one’s first love on earth. That is the secret.” (*Stopford Brooke.*)

## MAXWELL'S DEMONS.

To those unfamiliar with physical science the title of my paper may suggest a much more exciting subject than it is my intention to deal with. The particular class of demons I am about to talk of is not one found in any treatise of demonology or witchcraft. These demons are in fact of an essentially modern type, and may almost be called machine-made, for they have no individuality, and are all alike, having only one duty in life to perform, and that of a beneficent nature—or, at any rate, constructive and not destructive. They were the invention of the great physicist Clerk Maxwell as a suggestion of some method by which the universe might be prevented from running down into a state where further development was impossible. They are often spoken of as Maxwell's "sorting demons."

To understand what is meant, we must deal with some of the general principles of science as developed during the course of the last century or so. The first of these principles and the earliest to be stated (by Lavoisier, about the end of the 18th century) is that of the Conservation of Matter, in which it is assumed that no new matter can come into being, all apparent appearance or disappearance being merely a change of condition. The doctrine that something cannot come out of nothing is one that appeals to our common sense, and is in accordance with general experience. That, however, is a different thing from demonstrating that in all changes of state in which something does seem to go out of existence,—the burning of coal, for instance—if we collect all the products of the changes, we have just the same quantity of

matter as we had before. All this seems fairly simple, but, like many simple statements, it is open to much criticism. What is it that remains constant? It is clearly not the outer appearance, the colour, hardness, density and so on, the properties that appeal most readily to our senses. The usual test of matter is its weight, and it was by weighing that the Conservation of Matter was held to be proved. But that is not a constant property. Take the same material to another part of the globe, and its weight, if tested against some constant force, such as that of a spring, is found to change. So weight is not sufficient. Something much more fundamental appears to be mass or inertia. On that view, we could have no appearance of additional mass or disappearance of any existing mass, so long as we could prevent the escape or entry of any material out of or into the space we were dealing with. That till lately seemed to be solid ground. But, alas for the simplicity of our scheme, of late years mass itself in certain cases is shown to be a variable quantity, and to depend upon the velocity of motion through the ether; also to depend upon mere size of particles, for, in the case of electrons, which appear to be the fundamental units of matter, as of electricity, the electrical charge, if condensed on to a smaller surface, would increase the mass. Indeed, it is upon this fact that the diameter of an electron has been estimated at about the one hundred thousandth part of that of an ordinary atom. Even apart from this, the mere approach of one electron to another, if close enough, would appreciably alter the combined mass.

What, then, does the conservation of matter really mean? That is a question which we can hardly settle yet. Something out of nothing is, in its bald statement, hardly a thinkable scheme, but nevertheless all properties which we associate with our idea of matter seem to be capable of variation.

But the second great generalisation is possibly of a more

fundamental nature, though it was not till the middle of last century, a time well within the memory of many scientific men still living and working, that the idea was definitely formulated, and then for some time it was a matter for serious dispute. However, no principle of science has had more widely reaching results than that of the Conservation of Energy, which declares that no energy can be created or destroyed, but only transferred or transformed. This conception had a deep influence on popular scientific thought, for it, along with the Darwinian scheme, stated not many years afterwards, brought about a general materialistic tendency among more thoughtful and independent people, which reached its height some thirty years or so ago, and is only recently retreating into the background.

The principle of the Conservation of Energy is indeed of far-reaching importance, and seems, if too much stress is laid upon its sufficiency as an explanation of physical processes, to lead to the view that the whole universe is a universe of mechanism, governed by rigid mechanical laws, which would enable an all-knowing mind to predict the future to the uttermost limit. All the living world would be reduced to such a machine, just as certainly as the non-living, for this principle must apply as precisely to living as to non-living bodies.

A third principle, however, popularly much less known, but of almost equal importance, was enunciated by Lord Kelvin, then William Thomson, in 1852, soon after the Conservation of Energy had been established. This third principle we may call that of the Dissipation of Energy. It would seem at a first glance that, on the twin conceptions of the constancy of matter and the constancy of energy, you had a universe which would go on from everlasting to everlasting. But, unfortunately, physical science steps in with the somewhat disturbing evidence, which shows that the mere continuity of these two great entities is not enough to maintain a cosmos in being,

and that there is a continual, and, physically speaking, inevitable change in one direction, and that direction is towards final chaos. Energy may, from one point of view, be classed in two great divisions, available and non-available. The available energy is that which we can use to do work with—to build houses, to drive ships and trains and motor-cars and so on. The non-available or the dissipated is that portion of the total energy which cannot be drawn upon for any work whatever. And the principle of the Dissipation of Energy declares that there is a continuous degradation of the available energy into the non-available, with, of course, no reversal of the process on any conceivable mechanical or physical lines. There are several lines of experiment and of purely mathematical reasoning which show that such degradation of energy is inevitable. First we have the fact that, whenever work is done in actual life, besides the energy used in doing that work, there is always a certain amount wasted in friction, and this is practically all converted into heat. In fact, in most work that is done, by far the greatest part of the energy is at once or within a very short time converted into heat. Our own bodily efforts, walking along the street or moving in a house, are mainly to overcome some kind of resistance, which means an immediate change of bodily energy into the heating of our surroundings. We walk along a level road, for example, and at the end of it are at no greater height than at the beginning, and so have stored no energy. Nevertheless we have spent a good deal. Where has it gone? Partly in friction of the road and the air, and in a great variety of minor disturbances nearly all of which are soon resolved into heat. So in a motor-car, or a steamship, the power given out by the engines is largely dissipated in disturbances rapidly converted into heat.

Now it is one of the principles of the theory of heat that, while you can convert other forms of energy into heat, you cannot by any conceivable means use the whole of that heat

energy for the performance of work. In fact, it is easily shown that, to make heat do any work at all, you must pass it on from a source at a high temperature to a sink or discharge at a lower temperature, and the greatest amount of work it is possible to get in a theoretically perfect engine is represented by the difference of temperature divided by the absolute temperature of the source—that is, the temperature measured from the absolute zero. That measurement will give us the fraction of the total energy which can be used in any engine ; the remainder goes merely to heat up the colder body. Thus it is clear that if we have a one-sided action like this going on all through the physical universe, there is a constant reduction in useful energy, and a constant increase in the unavailable, until, if the system is a finite one, we should have in time a state in which all the energy had degenerated, and no activity except the molecular activity of heat was possible.

This point of view may not be easy to grasp by any one unfamiliar with physical science, but it may perhaps be made more intelligible by putting the matter in another way. We may regard energy roughly as in two conditions, organised and unorganised, the former belonging to matter in bulk and the latter to the molecules as ultimate particles. Now, when we deal with matter, we always deal with it in bulk. We cannot take individual molecules, and decide what to do with them ; they are immensely smaller than anything we can control directly, though of recent years we have been able to distinguish effects due to single atoms or molecules. Heat is molecular energy, and hence belongs to the unorganised category. It is merely the name for the energy of molecules in individual motion. A gas, for instance, is an assemblage of molecules all flying about at great speeds and colliding with one another many millions of times per second. The number of collisions of each per second, the mean speed, and the distribution of speeds among the molecules can all



be calculated with fair accuracy. We know what proportion are travelling at any given moment at one speed and what at another. Not that we can calculate the motions of any special particles, but on the laws of chance or probabilities we know that it is almost infinitely improbable that the conditions shall vary much from those calculated. The law of the Dissipation of Energy is based upon calculations of probabilities. It is practically certain that if you have a volume of gas containing countless billions of molecules colliding indiscriminately with one another, one half of the space would not be occupied by particles travelling at a high speed and the other half by particles travelling at a low speed. But this would be necessary if we wanted to make use of the energy to do work. There is nothing impossible in the conception, no law except that of chance or probability would be violated ; but we have only to think of a simple case, one of almost infinitely less complexity, to realise how unlikely it is that in dealing with enormous numbers of particles we should depart much from the expected conditions. If we found that a person dealt a pack of cards a hundred times in succession in the same order, we should have no hesitation in saying that there was some planning, that the cards could not have been shuffled properly without discrimination. Probably in the whole course of card-playing throughout the world no two successive deals have been alike unless there has been some pre-arrangement. Yet this is with only fifty-two cards ; and the chances of anything unexpected happening when you are working with billions of billions of particles may be realised—that is, if you can exert no directing influence over the individual particles. If you can, then you are like the card-trickster who can deal what cards he likes, and you can play tricks with the expected course of nature. We should not expect, on putting a kettle of water on the fire, that the water should freeze and the fire get hotter. But could we control

the heat movements of the molecules, we could perform that miracle without interfering with any so-called Law of Nature. The laws of chance merely would no longer hold, any more than with the card-trickster. We should not, however, have to destroy or create either energy or matter.

Now the conception of Clerk Maxwell was one of the quaintest ever put forward by a scientist. It was a semi-humorous one, but so profoundly suggestive that it at once took root in the scientific world, and has remained as the one real suggestion of some conceivable scheme by which the universe could be wound up. He supposed an ideal partition in a chamber full of gas, with numerous holes closed by weightless doors, at each of which was a small demon, whose one faculty was the power to judge the speed of a molecule. His duty was to open and close his door according to whether an approaching molecule was travelling fast or slowly. Thus he could let out of one compartment into the other all the fast molecules, while retaining the slower ones, with the result that on one side of the partition you would have a hot gas at a high pressure, and on the other a cold gas at a low pressure. Then you could make use of your energy, and get it to do work, which would have been impossible on the original equal distribution of heat and pressure. These sorting demons would therefore act as the winding-up agencies of nature. The otherwise inevitable degeneration of energy would be overcome, and, given a universe supplied not only with matter and energy, but also with sorting demons, we should have one capable of going on for ever and ever.

Now no one supposes that these little demons are real creatures, acting in such a highly artificial manner, but the conception is one of deep significance. It gives us the clue to a possible escape from the apparently inevitable running down of our universe, or, as that in actual fact appears now to be running down in the sense I have already explained, that

is, the energy available for work is constantly passing into dissipated energy—it suggests that there may be in the scheme of things a winding-up process which in some great cycle reverses the degeneration of energy which is the law of our present universe. The point of importance is that any such winding-up process is one of intentional action—we might say even intelligent action—and necessarily one in which the ultimate particles are in some way under individual control.

That a reversal of the existing course of nature is not contrary to any fundamental laws has been shown by Lord Kelvin, who proved that, on a purely mechanical view of things, if we exactly reversed at one instant of time all the motions of all the particles in the universe, we should start going backwards over precisely the same course of events. In that case the water would heat the fire, and not the fire the water, and all our ordinary experiences would be reversed, water would run uphill, we should walk backwards, our fires would produce coal instead of consuming it, and so on. But the removal or shifting of a single atom would spread a disturbance at ever increasing speed, which would rapidly bring chaos into our reversed scheme, and restore the usual course of events. Nevertheless this particular reversed distribution of movements is just as likely as any other special distribution, only it is unique in its results, while there is an infinity of other possible distributions, which would give us our ordinary experience; in fact, the reversal we have imagined would be just that control of individual particles, which we have seen would enable us to wind up our universe, for each atom would have to be dealt with simultaneously with the others and as an individual, in order that the reversal of all movements should take place. It has been shown in a recent book of a mathematical nature, dealing with these highly speculative matters—De Tunzelmann's *Electrical Theory and the Problem of the Universe*—that it is infinitely improbable that

any universe built up of atoms or ultimate particles of any kind could be a conservative system, unless there was an intelligent directive control, something which could guide the course of events in some such manner as Maxwell's sorting demons. Are we able to suggest any such agency in the world as we know it? The only field which at present appears open to us is that of life. There is no doubt that vegetable life at any rate does prevent the dissipation of solar energy by utilising it in building up organised forms, instead of simply letting it heat the surface of the earth, and thus degenerate into the unavailable category. That is not, however, necessarily the same thing as reconverting dissipated into available energy, and Lord Kelvin regarded it as improbable that living bodies had this power. Still, our knowledge of the way in which life utilises physical energy is so vague, that it may well be that some such guidance could be exercised on the ultimate particles by living processes, though, as life seems to deal always with complicated aggregates, that individual guidance would appear unlikely.

In any case, we are left with the undoubted fact that everywhere in nature, as far as we know, there is this constant and unceasing dissipation. Within the limits of the known universe, anyhow, there is perpetual progress towards an ultimate condition of chaos, in which all motion becomes the incoherent motion of the ultimate particles of matter, and all organisation has disappeared. Is there, somewhere outside the boundary of our visible universe, a perpetual regenerating action going on? Or may we assume that the action is of a cyclical nature, the universe emerging out of some primal condition, passing through a long period of activity and sinking back into a *pralaya*, or sleep, to reawaken at a renewed impulse? The latter conception is the more thinkable one, though the process of approaching *pralaya* is the only one that we can realise, since it is the stage we are in at present.

We might perhaps image to ourselves the beginning of the re-ordering, when the primeval chaos consisted of a mere assemblage of all the particles composing this physical universe flying about in indiscriminate disorder, as the work of a great multitude of Maxwell's sorting demons, with selective duties which enabled the disorganised motions to be gradually sifted out in a manner just reversing the existing process, in which energy steadily passes from the organised to the unorganised state. We may perhaps suppose, that in the earliest stage of our universe life was generally diffused in a very low form (the said demons) throughout all matter, and had as its first function the winding-up of physical energy and rendering it more and more available for higher functions, as the life itself became specialised ; until a stage was reached when the useful material energy became a maximum, and the further development of life involved a greater and greater concentration in definite forms, and the universe, materially speaking, started on its energy-dissipating course ; a sort of outbreathing of diffused life into matter, and an inbreathing of developed life from the material world.

G.

"The worlds, beginning with the world of *Brahmá*, they come and go, O *Arjuna* ;...

From the Unmanifested all the manifested stream forth at the coming of day : at the coming of night they dissolve, even in That called the Unmanifested."

"All beings, O *Kaunteya*, go into my *Prakriti* at the end of a *Kalpa* ; at the beginning of a *Kalpa* I again send them out.

Abiding *Prakriti's* Lord, I send forth again and again all this multitude of beings, helpless, by the force of *Prakriti*.

By my presiding, *Prakriti* sends forth the moving and unmoving ; because of this, O *Kaunteya*, the universe revolves."

( *Bhagavadgítá* VIII, 16 18 ; IX, 7, 8, 10).

## CONCEPTS OF THEOSOPHY.

### III. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF NEGATION.

(Continued from p. 31.)

The little that has been said of *Om*, the mystic word, indicates the way in which, running through the aspects of manifestation, is the ever-present Beyondness of the Self, negating the many of separation first by a universality of being technically called *sarvâtmikâ*, and then by negating the contents of the very mode of knowledge. Hence it will repay us if we try to understand further this life through its mystic symbol. A good deal of the misconceptions as to the states of consciousness, nay, even as to the three hypostatic conditions of the Cosmic Life, arise out of the wooden separative way in which we view them. These states are not the measures (*mâtrâ*) of the One Life, for that Life is ever One and Beyond. Just as in the series  $A=a+b+c+d+e+f$  etc., the unity of A is never lost sight of, though expressed by the addition of the concrete steps or terms, and just as the terms *a, b, c, etc.*, are but the indications of the same static unity, expressing itself through change and motion, so too the stages of *vâk*, or of the Self, are not "isolated and unco-ordinated" ( *अन्योन्य-सक्ताऽविप्रयुक्ताः* of the *Pras'nopanishat*). As S'ankara says, they are not like the four feet of the cow, capable of being separated off from the cow, however necessary for the manifested life of the cow ; they are not even the effete products of the life, thrown out of the central life. They are like the measures of a quantity of conch-shell coins.

Just as a quantity of milk, say a quart, is a unity, the milk, though we may seek to form an idea of the quantity thereof through the artificial measure of two pints, just as it is one milk and nothing else, and as the pint measures are merely helpful in understanding the wholeness and integrity of the quantity symbolised by a quart, so too are the states expressions of the unity and secondlessness of the Self—helping us to realise the transcendent nature of the Self in the self-same way as concrete individual things go to develop into manifestation the abstract behind. The physical and other principles of man, the states of consciousness, are mere attempts or efforts to realise the transcendent unity behind ; the man, the I, is the same whether in the physical or in the *buddhic* ; it is not increased if it has developed all the principles, nor is it anything the less of the I, if it is confined to the physical for manifestation. The principles are, individually and collectively, the expressions or indications of the I. Each of them is helpful if we see in it a step, an expression, of the unity beyond.

So far we are all in agreement. But the real difficulty comes, when we try to realise *how* the lower many of a plane go to manifest the higher unity behind, and the relation, if any, between the two. How are the states helpful in indicating that which is ever beyond ? Let us take an example from a lower plane of being, that of the desire-nature in us, the I which seeks to express itself as *rasa*, that is, as taste and essence. We seek to measure this life by concrete actions, and relations with concrete things and events. It is with actions as indicating the motive or the power of desire that physical man concerns himself. He sees in every action the presence of desire, and begins to classify the same. Now what is the meaning of this process of classification. We analyse the contents of an abstract idea, and think that it is by noting the points of resemblance and difference that the idea is evolved

out of the concrete many of phenomena. But the transcendent unity underlying the *genus* or the type must be realised in and through each individual phenomenon, ere we can collate and classify these apparent many. It is really the unity which we look for in and through the phenomena, and not the many. Man is seen first as a unity incapable of being ever disturbed by the age-qualities and potentialities of the body and the mind, ere we can attribute animality and rationality to him. Our notion also is the same even if apparently disturbing phenomena come into it, for, were it not so, we should not try to reduce this disturbing element into the dim idea of unity and beyondness behind, as we invariably do. We see a man acting not through lower desires, and we do not at once relinquish our idea of man as a unity. Hence though at first we may not believe that he can so act, though we may doubt the fact, yet it is because our idea of man is still unitary, that we try to find out some higher law of synthesis, some higher type of universal being operating in him, and thus dimly see the higher principles of *manas* or conscious individual life behind, and so on. The incursion of a new type of phenomena leads us, only with the help of the unitary idea, to discern the higher states of self-expression as indications of the same man.

We see how the desire is the same, whatever be the nature of the activity, and that the desire-nature is but the realisation, through *rasa*, of the ideas of things and the idea of the I behind. When we see thus, we are no longer engrossed in actions, for we see that an infinite number of concrete actions, or even an infinite number of desire-modes, are but the temporary effects of the one cause, the idea. We see also how the all of concrete things are unified by a type of actions, and how the all of concrete actions spring from *one* desire, and so on, till we dimly see that the real meaning of All, of *sarvam*, lies not in the concrete many of phenomena, but in a unity beyond.



The realisation of a transcendent unity beyond given phenomena is thus only possible, when we have first of all seen these discrete phenomenal manifestations as governed and co-ordinated by a life of universality, or, which is the same thing, of law. But so long as we fail to see this universality, so long must the concrete individual persist and influence our consciousness. Without the sense of the universal we can never eliminate the accidental elements in any given phenomenon, and never go beyond the immediacy of perception.

Thus it is only when the richness of concrete life in the physical is seen as being only the outward expression of the unity of life which *kāma* indicates, that it loses its separative value. The concrete richness of the physical helps to establish more firmly the unity of the desire-principle, in the selfsame way as the addition of individual terms and experiences does not add to the abstract idea, but makes it appear more universal and stable on the one hand, so far as its power of producing physical results is concerned, and helps us to realise its transcendent unitary nature, which nothing of phenomenon or expression can affect or disturb, on the other. So also, if we regard the states of consciousness as abstract principles of correlation tending to produce higher synthetic results—in short, as means to realise the Self—then the principle of Negation and Transcendence operates to reduce and negate the many of expression, and thence to merge the state into the next higher, and so on. So S'ankara says that, regarding the *padas* or states of consciousness and *vāk* as means to reach the highest, the fourth and the static state, the line of action is that the lower state with its richness of detail gets merged into the higher and so leads to the One.

त्रयानां विश्वदोनां पूर्व पूर्व प्रविज्ञापनेन तुरीयस्य प्रतिपत्ति-  
रितिकरण नाधनः पादशब्दः ।

( *Māndukya Commentary*, 21.)

What, then, is the exact nature of the one trend of consciousness, the *sarvâtmikâ* or universality, through which the apparent many of expression leads us to the three and only three modes of wisdom called the *Vedas*, and along which alone the *Vedas* can indicate the Self, the one Goal of the *S'âstras* (शास्त्रयोनि). Why is it that Western Science, in spite of its indefatigable endeavours to attain to the universal, has failed to lead humanity to the Self ?

Now a given number of discrete and isolated phenomena can be correlated in a various number of ways, all approaching universality. Physicists of the West read the outer from the standpoint of the natural constitution thereof, and attain to the units of physical matter called atoms. Chemists view the same from the standpoint of energy, and the universality attained to is one of *energy*, work-producing. Physiologists view the many from the standpoint of the organic life, and reach, as we have seen, the somatic life. But each shows forth only an aspect of the true universality of being, and is concerned only with a fragment of the infinite being underlying the object. A knowledge of the physiological laws which govern the human body thus fails even to explain the crudest phenomena of organic life, and touches not the aspect of the body as the expression of a transcendent unity beyond. The universality of the somatic life is imperfect, because, in the first place, it is artificial and does not exhaust the whole of our physical being. It is a generalisation obtained from one aspect only of our physical life ; and you cannot artificially exhaust the reality without making the concept imperfect in its nature and unstable in its direction. Hence is it that, in spite of our knowledge of the somatic life and of the different functions evolving out of it, *we cannot reconstruct a living organism*. The laws and functions, though universal, have a directive trend towards the concrete many of the physical. It is a vague unity, a mere background to explain and set in

relief the emergence and *laya* of the isolated functions, the correlations with outer things, which to the physiologists constitute the units of reality. The generalisation, therefore, is an unstable one, tending ever to gravitate towards the physical functions and relations of the organism to the many of the physical plane. It is an empty abstraction, a wordy generalisation, having the functions as the units of reality, with the result that the reality of the somatic life is a by-product of the concrete physical functions, which are ever in the background of the physiologist's mind.

If we look deeper, the very functions themselves are coloured by our preconceptions, and reveal not to us the mystery of *s'akti*, of energy, which, though one, manifests in an infinite number of concrete ways, according to the necessities of the psychic or conscious life behind. Thus, confining ourselves to the functions of *metabolism*, the physiologist does not tell us how the transmutation of what we may call the static energy underlying food into the kinetic one behind bodily functions is effected. He is content only to note the result, attributing the differences, the variations to outer agencies, unable to see how at the time of death the same energy of metabolism transmutes a portion of the physical cell, and how the mysterious process of the disintegration of the physical body is an example of the same energy as the healthy functions of a living organism. He forgets again that the mysterious process of metabolism acts in a twofold way, evolving functions on the one hand, and diffusing itself into an infinite number of concrete phenomena on the other, and that throughout the process of evolution of an abstract type and involution into the richness of concrete activity, there is a mysterious energy of *prāna*, ever approximating towards a static and psychic or conscious self. The generalisations, therefore, of the physiologists, however helpful they may be, have not taken us nearer to the mysterious principle of life on the one

hand or to the sense of the *I* in us on the other. Somatic life is merely an imaginary *locus* of the lower functions, and limited to the persistence of the very functions which it seeks to explain; and the unity arrived at is an unstable one, disturbed by the incursion of new facts from the domain of the psychic unity in us on the one hand or of new physical facts on the other.

Turning to the expositions of the latter-day Theosophy we find the same mistaken tendency at work. The admirable generalisations as to the astral and the mental planes are merely the projections of the lower physical life, empty abstractions, wherein we seek the persistence of the separated physical *I* on the one hand, and of the lower disjointed expressions of the life on the other. The lower many are held in solution, as it were, in the concepts of the Theosophists as well as of the physiologist, and there is in both the tendency towards precipitation to the lower. The causal man is not the real transcendence of life, the *I* beyond the phenomenal functions of mentality, desire and activity, the *I* whose reality is independent of lower manifestations, though indicated by the law, but is, on the contrary, the mere background in which we see the persistence in a subtle form of the units of lower relations. These units are to us the realities, and the end of knowledge seems to many to lie in the tracing back of these lower relations into the causal field. The life-history through several incarnations of certain members of the T. S. which appeared in the pages of the *Theosophist* is an illustration of the point. Our attention is ever directed to the physical beings, and the value of these so-called links from the past seems to lie in leading us to a recognition, not of the Master Consciousness beyond, nor of the supernal majesty of *I's'vara* as the One Goal of human evolution, but towards the establishment of the glory, as it were, of the different units of separative uniqueness, on the physical plane. The so-called psychic

laws are hinted at, not to indicate the Self but only to clothe the *dramatis personæ* artificially with separative grandeur, or to explain illusive events prophesied of them.

The concepts of Theosophy, as expounded by its latter-day exponents, are therefore unstable, and are subtly coloured by the illusion of the reality of physical life. They are materialistic and physical in their trend, and have not the lofty transcendent reality of the Spirit, the Self, which breathes through the *Upanishats*, and the *Purānas*. *Brahman* is an empty background, wherein we see the persistence of the lower *prākritic* principles, the mysterious power which holds in solution the lower units of reality on which the physical man bases his existence. Discipleship is the result of outer actions and outer relations, and not of the realisation of the fount of transcendent life beyond. Hence it requires the artificial devices of mystic ceremonies and so-called initiations, in which the many play an essential part. The Master is real, not because He represents a stratum of the supernal consciousness in us, but because He stood by the death-bed of a particular man, or anointed somebody else with the unction, so soothing to us, of individual stature. *I's'vara* is real, not because He is the One Transcendent Being and Consciousness, the source of the All, and yet beyond the concrete many, but because He is a director of human evolution, and the giver of individual boons to the separated aspirants. The *Avatāra* is real, not because of the Self whose language He seeks to body forth, but because we occultly see in the person of some one the persistence of the astral, mental or even higher individuality, special and separative though it be, of some mythological adept.

The trail of the serpent is over them all. The *sarvam*, the All, is a composite of the lower many; the I, the transcendent, is but the projection of the physical personality. We can well paraphrase for the benefit of the aspirant after Theosophy, the letter of the Master quoted in the *Occult World*:—"You do

not seem to realise the tremendous difficulties in the way of imparting the rudiments of our science, *A'tmâvidyâ*, to those who have been trained in the familiar separative method of yours. In conformity with the so-called science of *yoga*, you define but one cosmic energy, and see no difference between the energy expended by the experimenter who dabbles in the so-called knowledge of the higher planes, and the true scientific student of the Self as the Transcendence of Being. We do; for we know there is a world of difference between the two. The one uselessly dissipates and diverts the unity of consciousness; the other concentrates and utilises the same for the manifestation of the one Transcendent Being. And here please understand that I do not refer to the relative utility of the two, as one might imagine, but only to the fact that in the one case, there is but separativeness flung out without any transmutation of the *ahañkāra* into the higher potential form of transcendent uniqueness; in the other, there is just that. Will you permit me to sketch for you still more clearly the difference between the modes of the ordinary *yoga* and the Theosophical sciences and the true science of the Self. The materialistic Theosophy of to-day is utterly prosaic, and ever directed to the enthronement of the illusive personal life. Now for us, poor unknown philanthropists, no fact of any science is interesting except in the degree of its *potentiality of leading to or indicating the One Supernal Self*, on the one hand, and in the ratio of its *usefulness to mankind in indicating a stratum of universality*, beyond the colourings of the personal and the false individual, *on the other*." May I ask you, then, what have the so-called recent occult discoveries and investigations to do with the Self, with *I's'vara* in His fulness of life and light, or with the universe viewed as a conscious intelligent whole ever pointing towards the Self.

The concepts of Theosophy, as enunciated now-a-days, are therefore illusive and ephemeral, without the living power

of the Self behind. The generalisations are *prākritic*, because of the persistence of the lower many strung together with the help of the principle of causality therein. It is significant here to note that the *vishaya*, or that which is seen as outside the Self, the object, is *prakṛiti* according to Patanjali. Hence the *Bhāgavatam* says that just as *ākāśa*—the sky as the basis of manifestation—is seen by the ignorant as being of a blue colour, owing to the secret action of the minute water particles held in solution, so do the ignorant see in the one Self—the Transcendence of Being and Consciousness, the Beyondness of Life—the traces of the *many* of manifestation.

यथा नभसि मेघौ घो रेणुर्वा पार्थिवोऽनिले

तथा दृष्टिं दृश्यत्वमारोपितमबुद्धिभिः

( 1-3-31. )

This is what H. P. B. meant by *conditioned fulness*. Water we call 'wet', not because it has the quality of wetness, but because it is the cause of making other things wet. So also with the Self, it is the cause of what we call the concatenation of the cause, the effect, and the actor in *prakṛiti*, without being really either of the three. This is the meaning of *adhyāsa*, or ascription, spoken of by the Hindu Philosophers.

The notion of causality, the highest of the additive tendencies in man, cannot of itself take the consciousness beyond the concrete and the finite it seeks to explain. The colourings of the phenomenal effect ( कार्य ) persist in the cause ( कारण ), and the result is, as already said, a composite and unstable unity, never the true unity, though having the semblance of it. The next contribution to the science of the Self—the next stage which leads us towards the true unity—is the *Vedāntic* notion of causality, no longer regarded as the means to explain the persistence in the higher cause of the lower effects, but as the notion that the cause is the effect in terms

of the lower, and not *vice versa*. What this notion means can be dimly guessed, if we consider for a moment the trend of consciousness implied in the modern scientific conception of cause, as compared to the metaphysical conception of the *Vedānta*. The one is satisfied with the sequence in time and the juxtaposition of the two poles, with, in short, the dim realisation of something uniting the two. The metaphysical concept, on the other hand, enjoins us to see from above and not from below, from the standpoint of the cause and not from that of the effects. With it the cause is first realised, dimly though it be, and then it is seen to be present in an unmodified form in the effects—even though there may be outer modifications of its *expressions* due to the plane in which the effects manifest.  $H_2O$  is the cause, the causal water, and though in the gaseous, the liquid, and the ice stages there are accidental modifications of the *form* or *appearance* of the water according to the plane or density, though in the gaseous we have  $H_2O$  and *expansibility*, in the liquid  $H_2O$  and *mobility*, and in the ice  $H_2O$  and *stability*, though, according to the stage of manifestation, it affects differently the other objects around, yet it is always  $H_2O$  and nothing else. The variations in the forms or appearances are illusive and negligible. They do not add to the notion as to the essence of water, but are there to bring out more clearly its essential nature as against the accidental forms. But we can eliminate the formal or the accidental, only when we have a clear notion of the essential, and when we realise that there is a universal principle or energy behind the formal of which the latter are expressions and indications. The latter is what science explains as molecularity—the tendency in things to preserve and maintain a fixed ratio between the molecules thereof, identical in nature, suggesting, if not clearly understanding, that the reality of  $H_2O$  has a life of universal relation with other things on the one hand, and with the many projections of itself on the other. *P* or density



is variable in its value, but its ratio or power of relation is ever the same, being always  $\frac{M}{G \times V}$ , where  $M$  represents the mass,  $G$  the universal law of gravitation, and  $V$  the volume.  $M$  and  $V$  cannot exist without the action of other things, and imply that all things are inter-related, if not parts of an organic whole.  $G$  or gravity is the cosmic power, the power underlying the earth, the expression of a larger life and power as yet dimly understood.  $P$  itself is an exponent of a life of relation—the relation among the self-projections of  $H_2O$  in manifestation in different degrees of molecularity. Thus, though every one of the terms is a symbol of the life of relation, of interaction, and therefore is of a universal trend, none of them points to an individual of separation, the  $H$  and the  $O$ , the atoms themselves being dimly realised as merely the *bases*, the *upādhis* of manifestation of a large type of unitary energy, which is the same as in  $Cl$ . (chlorine). Now the question remains still unsolved, as to how  $G \times P \times V$ , which is to all appearance a composite, can lead us to  $d$ , or the density of the particular thing, how the relating unitary conception of density can evolve out of the interaction of the term  $G \times P \times V$ . It must be conceded at once that in order really to lead us to the unity  $d$ , the terms must so blend, so coalesce, that there is no individual residue in the components; that the unity of their interaction must be such as to leave no other residue except that which is an expression of or which indicates the unity of  $d$ . In short, the terms must cease to have any individual life of their own. The whole of their so-called separated being must yield itself to the sole end of leading up to the  $d$  notion. Their unity thus is the unity of  $d$  as a transcendent something dimly diffusing itself, or rather getting indicated by the whole of the being of the terms  $G$ ,  $P$ ,  $V$ , merging into the  $d$  idea. To the extent that the terms can so *yield their whole being* for the upbuilding or expression of the  $d$ , to that extent  $d$  is real.

Human life may be expressed as the constant effort to prove that :—

$$\frac{\left(\frac{s}{a}\right)^n + \left(\frac{t}{v}\right)^m + \left(\frac{f}{i}\right)^o + \left(\frac{r}{w}\right)^q + \left(\frac{u}{p}\right)^l}{S+T+F+R+U} = 1$$

where s represents the sound-value of consciousness, a = the *ākāśa* state, t = touch-value, v = *vāyu*, f = form or *rūpa*, i = fire, r = *rasa* or taste and flavour of consciousness, w = water, u = uniqueness, p = *prithivi*; n, m, o, q, and l represent the indices, the exponents of *s'akti*. S, T, F, R, U, are the universal conscious values or cosmic *tattva*-values of sound, touch, form, *rasa* and uniqueness; and P is the cosmic power or *prakṛiti*. Each man knows only the value which helps in solving the equation, so as to lead to his I or Unity of Transcendence. The reduction of the equation to unity is effected in various ways. The ordinary man knows not the values of a, v, i, w and p, nor of S, T, F, R and U. To him life is an attempt at addition of the sound, touch, and form values, so that it may lead up to his I. The occultist knows the indices or exponents. Now the unity arrived at by any single individual is a make-shift and unstable unity dependent upon his I-value and the values of cosmic universal powers. But even then the process of reduction discloses the following laws, that each of the terms is to be approximated towards the I-consciousness, and that the value of any outer object or any psychic state is the value of approximating or indicating the I of the moment with the help of a universal denominator or middle term. To the ordinary man, everything is valued with the help of the denominator of pleasurable, and the numerator represents the units, if we may so call it, of the type of pleasurable that is used. The aboriginal, then, has for his standard gross or physical pleasurable directly perceived, while the artist may have the ideal pleasurable, or pleasure in the mental, as his standard. The second point to notice is that the pleasurable

ability is a universal something, or, to put it more definitely, the universal resultant of everything.

But this attempt at working out the problem from the standpoint of pleasure cannot lead to the true unity of the I. There are other modes or types of results to the consciousness, such as mentality, apperception, and so forth. Hence the solution to the equation of life is unstable, and ever liable to be disturbed by the incursion of new facts. We may connect the mental state with the desire-responses, as the causes or effects thereof, but even then we do not get at the whole of the life expressed. Nay, we may even proceed further. We may, as is often done, see in pleasure the beginning and end of physical activities on the one hand, and of the mental state on the other, and use these to bring about the desired result, yet we cannot wholly reduce the physical and the mental exponents or *tanmātras* and *bases* or *tattvas*. There will be some unrealised residue always. My child may to some extent represent and express my thirst after happiness, and in my selfishness and narrowness I may think that subservience to my well-being is the sole value of the child. Yet the child as an entity is beyond the artificial value placed on it by me. It has a being outside my ordinary consciousness and independent of it. It has mental values larger than mere pleasurable, it has co-relations beyond my I of the moment. In short, my reduction of the child is an imperfect one, because it cannot express the whole of the life of universality with which I would fain clothe it. Nor is it the Transcendent, the Ever-beyond, the Unity beyond *prākṛitic* change and ever perfect, into which I can pour out the whole of my being and be ever at rest. It cannot satisfy my tendency towards the Beyondness of Consciousness. This tendency of our consciousness to reach perfection and rest, which is our truest being, is seen as the power behind our desire to deify the separative *Guru* and Master, and endow him with specific occult powers

beyond the normal. The desire for universality, on the other hand, thus dominated by the separative life, leads us to make converts to our modes of thinking and aspiration, fondly hoping that thereby we may be able to endow the separative and fragmentary concept with universal being. We forget that nothing which is embodied, nothing which is conscious of separation, nothing whose being is isolated from the whole, can help us.

The *tattvas*, the *tanmātras* or exponents, the principles of man, and other *quasi*-universal concepts too are imperfect, and for the selfsame reasons. However useful they may be to train and advocate our separative life, their universality is conditioned and cannot include and express the whole of our being. Further, they have not the *fulness*, the perfection, which comes from the I in us. Hence a solution of the problem of life with the help of these cannot lead to the perfect unity and homogeneity of the Self, the *a'tman*. All our psychic states are fractions, of which the principles as indicating a trend towards universality of being are the *denominators*—modes which denominate and specify the type of cosmic energies and the extent of universality attained. The numerators express the *quantum* or extent of unique being realised in each. The perfect reduction of these fractional terms or phenomenal modes to the unity of the Self is the goal which never varies, which is stimulating humanity, the one power behind evolution, the one end of all these processes of the suns.

DREAMER.

(*To be continued.*)

## COGITATIONS OF A STUDENT OF THEOSOPHY.

( *Continued from p. 71.* )

It hardly seems worth while to use up space simply in order to translate into the technical terms of modern psychology, what I said last time about the higher or super-intellectual type of intuition ; though I am bound to state that even the existence of such a thing is not as yet recognised by the vast majority of writers on the subject. Still a door has been opened, or at least set ajar, through which a gradual recognition of its existence may creep in by degrees, largely through the writings of Prof. William James on the *Varieties of Religious Experience* on the one side, and through the experimental observation of hypnotic, trance, and other abnormal states on the other. But we are now less directly concerned with the attitude of the scientific and philosophical world to the matter, than with an effort to understand ourselves a little better the character of the experiences to which the term may properly be applied, and what significance it should be understood to imply. For the present, at any rate, it will be expedient to treat the terms 'super-intellectual intuition,' 'spiritual intuition' and 'buddhic consciousness' as synonyms, though possibly more extensive researches, more careful observation, and a wider range of experience may ultimately make it desirable to differentiate these terms, and assign to them different meanings. But that will not be the case within the scope of our present cogitations.

To begin with, it seems to me that we shall best make clearer to ourselves what we mean by these terms, by considering the most marked types of the experience to which we

intend them to apply. Afterwards, it will probably be less difficult to identify such more or less faint foreshadowings, and fore-gleams of this type of experience as may be traceable within the range of our ordinary normal consciousness and observation.

It is naturally to the great mystics of various countries and times that we turn to find the typical experiences which can give a clearer content to these terms, spiritual intuition and the like. For, apart from the mystics, there are very few men or women who have left us any clear or detailed record of experience suitable for this purpose, though fortunately there have been just a very small number outside the ranks of the mystics proper whose testimony will help in elucidating and supporting that of the latter.

That this is the case need not surprise us; indeed, it is what we should be led to expect *a priori*, when we call to mind what has been said regarding the characteristic marks which distinguish this 'super-intellectual' or 'spiritual' intuition from the more normal type of intuition which we have been considering at such length.

These characteristic marks were :—(1) negatively, the absence of that sense of externality to, or otherness than, that to which the intuition relates; positively, the sense of being *one with* the object of intuition, the feeling of knowing it *from within*; (2) the fact that this type of intuition seems to be more closely allied to *feeling* than to *thought*.

Now the special goal of the mystic is *union with God*; or, more generally, *union* with the object of devotion, under whatever name or form that object may be conceived. Hence, since the mystic seeks union as his goal, we should naturally expect to find among mystics, *i.e.*, among those who strive specially after *union*, the best examples of that form of intuition which is characterised negatively by the greater or less absence of the sense of *otherness*, of *externality*, and positively

by the feeling of being *at one with* the object of intuition, of knowing it *from inside*.

Further, since another dominant key-note of all true mysticism is Love, we should expect to find most often among their experiences of intuition such as also carry the second characteristic mark in question, namely, that of being closely allied with, and akin to, feeling rather than thought.

Indeed, I may as well admit at once that it is from the mystics especially that I believe the whole conception of 'spiritual' intuition to have been originally derived ; or, at any rate, that the distinguishing of 'spiritual' from 'intellectual' intuition in any clear and definite manner is primarily arrived at from a consideration of their experiences. At any rate, a study of their experiences does, as a matter of fact, show us the existence of a type of experience characterised by these two marks. And further, that this type of mystic experience may properly be termed 'intuition' is evidenced by the fact that all those who have had such declare unanimously, with one consent, that these experiences were essentially experiences of direct, immediate *knowing* ; though they differed from ordinary, direct knowing, or, as we have termed it, 'intellectual intuition,' in the two respects already described.

All this is further borne out, supported and illustrated by the testimony of the few who have experienced similar states, not being themselves mystics, in so far at least as mysticism may be held to imply a *religious* colouring. A useful collection of instances of this kind, unfortunately all too few, may be found in Dr. R. M. Bucke's volume entitled *Cosmic Consciousness*.

To return, however, to the mystics. If we accept the fact of such experiences, then the question may naturally be raised whether or not this 'spiritual intuition' or 'super-intellectual knowing' has brought to the light of our common

day any results which are *objectively and generally* valid and true? The mystic describes his experience as essentially a peculiar and especial mode of *knowing*. Now unless we rule him as a witness out of court from the outset, we must accept the fact that *to himself* the experience in question is one of knowing—that in his own consciousness he feels that he does really and truly *know* with the same direct, immediate certainty that belongs to ordinary immediate waking experience. Hence we cannot deny or question the truth and validity of this, *so far as the actual experiencer, the mystic himself*, is concerned. *For him*, the experience of this special mode of knowing is indubitably valid and conclusive; nor can we call in question his conviction that he has truly obtained *knowledge* thereby—so far as he himself is concerned. And equally of course we, as individuals, may accept and believe his statement, or his formulation of the knowledge he claims thus to have obtained, so far as we ourselves are concerned, without further criticism or examination. This, however, holds good only within the private, individual, subjective world of each one of us. In our case, it would be individual belief or faith, in that of the mystic *to and for himself alone* knowledge; but it would *not* be knowledge or truth in an objective and generally valid sense unless we assume that the world of men in general has placed itself on the basis of accepting this particular ‘revelation’ as unquestionably true and valid.

Such, indeed, was the position of mediæval schoolmen in Europe, and it still remains that of those who accept the verbal inspiration and infallibility of any Scripture or Bible. But the course of history would seem to have shown that this position contains in itself the germs of inevitable dissolution and destruction—at least for the observant and thoughtful student of life. Thus one finds oneself driven gradually step by step to base one’s standpoint not upon science, but upon *scientific method*; for the reason that *scientific method* alone



has so far led to results which are universally *verifiable*, and such as can be verified under normal conditions by those who care to devote themselves to the task.

Now this standpoint does not involve any neglect of the mystics or their experiences, neither does it reject or deny any of their statements claiming to express knowledge, merely as such. But the acceptance of scientific *method* does involve the comparison, the analysis and the criticism of the 'truth-claims' of *all* mystics alike, as well as of those, not being strictly mystics, who have had (or claim to have had) analogous or similar experiences.

It is just like the exploration of a new country; the maps, descriptions, observations of each explorer must be compared and checked and tested with and against those of all the rest. And in like manner, careful precautions need to be taken, not to accept as a fresh and independent observation or corroboration the mere reproduction of some statement made by a previous traveller. Otherwise we should have to believe in the 'gold-digging ants' of Arrian as actual facts in natural history, because Marco Polo, centuries later, also tells us about them.

But before it becomes possible to carry out the task of studying or evaluating the experiences of the mystics and others, a great deal of preliminary spadework needs to be done. Not only the records left by European mystics, but also those of India, China, Japan, as well as of Musalman countries must be collected, edited, perhaps translated, at any rate carefully sifted, analysed and arranged. Then, and then only, will it be possible to know with certainty and accuracy what the material itself is worth, and what use can be made of it.

On the other hand, fresh experimental studies and observations must be made, modern instances collected and recorded in as much detail as possible, while the results so obtained will also have to be brought into relation with the outcome

of the study of the past in this regard. And I believe that by no means the least important of the tasks lying before the current century will be the work that lies along these two lines of investigation.

For the moment, it would be worse than useless even to attempt any detailed discussion or study of the subject. Neither has the material available from the past been gathered or arranged, nor has any serious, systematic effort been attempted by way of either experiment or observation in recent times. Hence one can only speak in the most general way on the subject, and indicate the work that needs to be done. But still one may, perhaps, in a very general way, point to some features which one may expect to encounter when these studies are pushed further; features which seem to follow from the characteristics of 'spiritual intuition' already indicated.

Take first the question of the 'knowledge' so obtained. By hypothesis such knowledge in its own nature is 'super-intellectual;' that is, it must *differ in kind*, not merely *in degree* from intellectual knowledge—that is, as experienced and realised by the mystic himself. But when the mystic comes to express or formulate *to other men* the knowledge he has gained, he *must* express it in terms of the intellect, in words or symbols, because he has no other means of expression, save perhaps in the case of a musician or an artist, who may use his art to some extent as such a means. Even to himself, to his *own* mind, the mystic can only use his intellect and its furnishings as means of expression; and though he can perhaps thus come nearer to the reality of his higher intuitions, since he does not need to employ *words*, yet still he must be limited not only by the nature of the intellect itself, but also by the 'furnishing' which his mind may contain. Therefore he can *at best* and even to himself, express only very partially and incompletely what he realises in 'spirit-

ual intuition ;' while, when he seeks to convey it to other men in words, the difficulty becomes enormously greater, the imperfection and incompleteness of the expression largely increased.

Therefore one needs always to bear in mind these inevitable limitations and difficulties in estimating or studying the 'knowledge' gained, or claimed to be gained, in this way. And further very great allowances must be made for, and account taken of, the fact that the form, the way in which alone a mystic can express his 'knowledge' is conditioned almost entirely by his religious, social and mental environment, education and heredity. So that we who come later to the study of his record must allow for all this, and strive to understand what he really meant to convey, without permitting ourselves to be blinded by the local and personal *form* in which he expressed his meaning.

Next consider the fact that these 'spiritual' intuitions are somehow much more closely allied with *feeling* than with *thought* in the ordinary sense. Recall further the amount and intensity of the personal feelings, prejudices and the like, which are aroused by, and cluster round, questions and problems which in their nature are purely intellectual. Therefore it seems obvious that in dealing with the content, no less than with the form of 'spiritual' intuitions, the amount and intensity of such feelings aroused will be very much greater. Indeed we have only to read the history of human thought in any country to see that this has been the case, over and over again. Thus there will inevitably be very great difficulties to be encountered in this respect also, difficulties which will demand the lapse of generations and the most devoted application of many minds before they can be even partially overcome.

But—some one may ask—why incur all this labour, this trouble, nay, this suffering, at all? Why not let each man

and woman simply accept what appeals to him or her, what helps each to best live out his or her own life ; what makes each happiest and most promotes his own growth and evolution, as well as that of the society in which he is a unit ?

Even an attempt to answer these questions adequately would need many pages, so I must content myself with indicating very briefly one reason why, in my opinion, it will be neither possible nor expedient to rest content in the attitude towards these matters which the above questions imply ; impossible, at any rate, for a very large and important section of humanity ; inexpedient, in the interests not only of that section, but also of the majority at least of mankind.

Whether rightly or wrongly, wisely or unwisely, the active-minded section of mankind has set itself steadily and unflinchingly to the task of arriving at 'objective' truth regarding all matters affecting humanity, and more especially regarding such as concern its most vital interests—'objective' truth here meaning either what can be experimentally demonstrated or, when experimental demonstration as such is out of the question, what commands the general assent of those qualified to judge, and *also* stands the test of oft repeated examination and investigation at the hands of many enquirers.\*

In other words, an ever *increasing* number of the best and most active minds are deliberately adopting the *scientific method* as their common criterion and are applying—or trying to apply—that method to all questions and problems.

It is also obvious, I think, that the actual results achieved in all departments of investigation by this method have been such, that it is not to be wondered at if the general public, the ever growing mass of more or less educated men and women, is becoming ever more deeply impressed with, and

\* *N.B.*—This is *not* intended as a *definition* of 'objective' truth, but simply as a very rough *description* of what I mean to imply when using the term in what follows

led by, the idea that *only* such results as can be validated by this method are sufficiently certain and reliable to serve as a guide to conduct, a basis for life, an outline, however incomplete, of man's nature and his relation to the universe.

It may be urged that this outlook has changed, is indeed constantly changing, and often with surprising rapidity. That is quite true; but the change itself has been brought about by the further application of this same scientific method, while the results which are *retained* in the new and changed outlook, are precisely those which have stood the test of the more prolonged application of that method, its *new* elements and factors being those which have endured its first application or have been brought to light by its means.

Moreover we find ourselves only at the very beginning of this process, almost witnesses of its birth-throes; but with every decade its influence spreads more and more widely, with each generation a larger proportion of mankind will come under its influence, and their outlook on the world, their inmost beliefs and convictions must needs be shaped upon its results, moulded by its conclusions.

It seems therefore to me a matter of practical certainty that the active-minded section of humanity, in two or three generations hence, will be completely dominated by this method, and their whole outlook upon the world, upon life, conduct and human nature will be shaped according to its results.

This appears to me to indicate that, if the attitude implied in the above questions is generally adopted, the result will be that all the outcome of past mystic experience will inevitably be set aside as valueless and will cease to exercise any influence upon the minds either of thinking people or of the general public. For one may be sure that there will not be wanting those who will strenuously enforce the argument that conceptions, results and ideas which have not been submitted to the test of scientific method and investigation must

needs be unreliable and worthless. The world at large will listen to them, and will accept their *dictum* because of the proved, verified efficiency and reliability of that method, so that humanity will pass on impoverished and cramped in its outlook on life from the lack of those supremely important elements which, in my conviction, mysticism and its congeners can alone supply in adequate measure.

Hence it seems to me that we who believe in the real value of mystic experience, who attach great, nay, supreme importance to the religious and spiritual attitude towards life, cannot shut our eyes to the necessity of the work that has been indicated, or shirk the duty of furthering it by every means in our power.

And now let us sum up very briefly the main results which have emerged from this examination of intuition.

‘Intuition’ means and implies, in all cases alike, direct, immediate perception or awareness.

Of this direct perception we have seen reason to distinguish three distinct forms or types, *viz.* :—

First :—direct perception by means of the senses.

Second :—‘intellectual intuition,’ which itself may again be subdivided according as the object to which the intuition relates, *i.e.*, which is thus directly perceived, belongs to the world of forms or to that of the abstract.

Third :—‘spiritual’ or ‘super-intellectual’ intuition, which is distinguished from ‘intellectual’ intuition pure and simple by two characteristic marks, *viz.* :—(1) that it lacks the sense of externality or *otherness* in regard to its object, and on the contrary seems to experience that object from within, as if united to, at one with it; (2) that it is more closely allied with, and akin to feeling, rather than thought.

S. T.

(*To be continued.*)

## THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER.

I think it is high time that we should dissociate in our minds the fifth of November from the abortive plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament at the instigation of Catesby and by the hand of Guido Fawkes, and rendered innocuous by the suspicions of Lord Monteagle, not only because an age of toleration has set in, but for other and deeper reasons. We Protestants or Anglo-Catholics, whichever we please to call ourselves, have no reason to throw stones at our co-religionists the Catholics ; our hands are none so clean in the matter of plots and persecutions, that we can afford to perpetuate their doings and ignore our own. If there are spots in Queen Mary's reign, there are spots and blots enough in the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, and even of great Elizabeth. Therefore let us see for a moment if we cannot trace our oyster-shell shrines, our crackers, and our bonfires to a somewhat more remote past than November 5, 1605.

It is curious, when we think of it, how many dates there are in our Calendar whose origin is vastly different from the reason generally assigned to them ; the spread of the knowledge of comparative Religion forbids it.

Take our Christmas for example. The perspective is imperfect which describes that festival as only a continuation historically of the Roman Brumalia. It is far older and of far wider extent than Rome alone. December 25th, now fixed by the Christian Church as the date of the birth of the infant Jesus, was, as the winter solstice, celebrated almost universally as the return of the unconquered sun, and in that respect, was associated with all those mighty Deities who bore a solar

connotation. Nor was the Deity born otherwise than in correspondence with the Gospel narrative, nor are there wanting still further details, as the place of birth, a stable or a cave, or again, the slaughter of the Innocents as an accompanying factor.

Krishna's birth was celebrated at the winter solstice. His mother Devakî or Deva-Mâyâ was a pure virgin. By flight He escapes from the cruelty of his uncle Kansa (the Hindu Herod), who, in hopes of killing Him, slaughters all new-born male infants in his kingdom.

In Egypt the birth of Horus, son of the peerless Isis was celebrated on December 25th. She is represented with Horus in her arms, type of all future Madonnas, or standing on a crescent moon with twelve stars round her head.

In Persia the birth of the sun-god Mithra was celebrated on December 25th, born in a cave or grotto. His worship spread over the Western world, and his altars are found all over Britain. Attis again, was regarded as born of a virgin. The birthdays both of the Greek Bacchus and the Syrian Adonis were held at the winter solstice.

But enough has been said in proof of this.

If we turn to Easter, the Feast of the Resurrection, a name itself of a Saxon Goddess, and probably not remotely connected with the Babylonian Ishtar, we shall find a universal custom prevailing, that the God who is born on the winter solstice, dies and comes again to life at the vernal equinox. This was the case with Osiris-Horus, who, slain in conflict with the serpent, rises again as Horus-Osiris, destroys the serpent, and rules over the Death-world. Tammuz, or Adonis, or Attis, dies on March 25th, and in three days His resurrection is celebrated.

The festival of Dionysus was almost precisely similar. The Scandinavian Baldur repeats the story, as does Quetzalcoatl from Mexico. They all die on or about the vernal



equinox, remain in the grave for three days, then rise to life again.

Now what have we on or about November 5 which we can trace to a source similarly remote?

Clearly we have it in the death and rising again of the Celtic God Sam-hein (Peace-fire) who is the God of Life beyond the Grave. He is said to have died and risen again in three days to immortal life, becoming thereby the Lord and Conqueror of Death. To him none but bloodless sacrifices were offered. He was Himself both the Deity and the 'sacrifice once offered'. His festival was celebrated on November 1st, and was known as La Samon.

Now this was distinctly a fire-festival. In ancient Britain at this time, "all fires save those of the Druids, were extinguished," and from their altars alone the sacred fire had to be obtained by all householders, care however being taken by the priests that it was only distributed to those who were at peace with God and man.

Therefore I think we may fairly link on, as with its source and origin, the apparently senseless letting off of crackers and burning of bonfires on November 5, with this ancient and religious custom, and remove from our minds and memories all that may tend to provoke the slightest feeling of hostility or recrimination from our Christian brethren the Catholics. There is of course another and further thought, which I think, supports my contention. November 1 is All Saints' Day, and November 2 is the day appointed for the memory of All Souls (dear to the mind of the American poet J. R. Lowell), and Sam-hein, as Lord of Death, was in this capacity judge of souls and dispenser of rewards and punishments. Prayers therefore were offered to him on this particular night. It was a night of special intercession by the living for the souls of those who had died in the preceding year.

Now if All Saints' Day can thus be traced, I think that we can, without rashness, trace our Fifth of November customs to the same source, and in honour of the Lord of the Peace-fire, and rid ourselves of the obnoxious charge of perpetuating not a religious custom, but a so-called historical incident, which, after all, is quite probably as baseless as the other alternative is well founded.

F. G. MONTAGU POWELL.

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### NOTICE.

As usual, the annual gathering of the Independent Theosophical League, as well as of its Indian Section, will take place at Benares on the 27th, 28th, and 29th of December next. It is our earnest wish to make the meetings as interesting as possible, and in this view we solicit the warm co-operation of one and all of our members and sympathisers, for with our small numbers we cannot do much without such co-operation; whereas, if each one of us contributes his little mite and brings his whole heart into the little congregation, the desired effect will not be difficult to attain. As the future life and growth of the movement will depend in no mean measure on the enthusiasm manifested in this gathering, every lover of the cause which the League has embraced should do his best to be present on the occasion, and to make it as inspiring and impressive as he can.

Intimation of every intention to attend the meetings should be kindly given to the undersigned not later than the 15th of December in order to enable them to make the necessary arrangements for board and lodging.

No programme of the ceremonies has as yet been fixed; but they will consist of lectures and addresses by the members present, and also, if practicable, sermons and discourses by Pandits and Sadhus. Endeavours will further be made to enliven the proceedings with divine music. So help us God.

LILIAN EDGER,

*Jt. General Secretary, I. T. League.*

ISHVARI PRASAD,

*Local Secretary, Indian Section, I. T. League.*

## CORRESPONDENCE.

TO THE EDITOR,

The various criticisms that have appeared in the *Pilgrim* about my article on Positive Religion mainly relate to what I believe are the basic differences in Philosophy. The main object of Philosophy is to explain the relationship of man to the outer world. There are three essentially different modalities on which such explanations have been made, which I may call the spiritualistic, the materialistic and the positive or relative. The first wants to explain matter as generating from spirit, the second to explain spirit as generating from matter, the third realises that both these explanations are beyond the reach of our real knowledge, and that therefore all research after the primal and final causes must give way to other researches that are decidedly within our power of knowledge. Yet both spiritualistic and materialistic philosophies answer to various fundamental needs of the human soul. The most important mental need that both try to satisfy is that which urges the mind to find a synthesis, a harmonised and all-inclusive explanation of the world and man, either by deriving all from one same principle, or by relating all to one common centre. But when the mind gives up both the spiritualistic and the materialistic positions as unsatisfactory to the scientific mind, or as being problems beyond our knowledge, the need of a synthesis is none the less felt. Though rejecting the yet unproved beliefs that spirit originated matter, or that matter originated spirit, beliefs that were held and disputed for centuries, the positive mind fully recognises the existence and action of both spirit and matter, as well as their relationship and mutual influence upon each other. Though this view seems to be opposed to unity because it admits a primal dualism between matter and spirit as represented by the cosmic world and the human world (we say human world, not because we deny the existence of spirit outside the human body, but because we do not know of any higher manifestation of it), the positive synthesis is realised in uniting both by the sacred tie of Love; it is not an objective synthesis centering around any special mysterious spirit or matter, but it is a subjective synthesis that originates in our love and recognises that if we cannot know whether the cosmic world is animated by an all-loving disposition towards us, we know for

certain that we love the world, and we willingly endow it with the power of returning us that love ! We want to fancy that the world loves us for the pragmatic reason that we find infinite beauty and moral power in that fancy, which can help us to live a better life. We do not pretend it to be a reality for our intellect, an objective reality, but it is a reality for our heart, which responds its love to the world as if it were not a fancy but an objective reality ! So my answer to the Joint Editor is in the first place, that all depends on our *will* to love, and that when the *will* exists, the *heart* can love the world as much *par suite* of the poetical hypothesis, as if the mind knew of its love, because man then realises the beauty and bliss of love in itself ; so that what matters most to us is not to know whether the world *loves us* or not, but to rise to the ability of finding our bliss in loving the world. The hypothesis that the world perhaps reciprocates our love, only serves to enhance the charm we find in loving it, so that the hypothesis is a help and incentive to our outpouring of love towards a cosmic world we can love for its beauty and goodness towards us in allowing us to live and to love ! But I realise that certain individuals may want an absolute certainty that their love is reciprocated as an incentive and a stimulus for the outpouring of their love ; but then it is not the highest kind of love.

This first question may also be answered by the following inverted question. Supposing a conception that has for a long time been considered as an undoubted reality, comes to be considered as corresponding to no reality at all, but the beauty and goodness embodied in the conception still remains as fully appreciated, or even more so ; will its power to inspire us and arouse the highest and purest emotions completely disappear ? For my part I do not believe it would, though I would not venture to say it would not diminish this power to a certain degree, which will vary with the nature of the conception and of the individuals. For instance, if the historicity of Christ or of Homer were absolutely disproved, it would not make the slightest difference to me to consider these names as subjective types, as mythical personalities, when their works and teachings might be proved to be the collective product of various religious teachers and poets. The names of Christ and Homer would then still stand as holy and dear to me, though they would simply stand for the collective efforts that have been grouped under their names. Though the personalities be proved to be unreal, their very portraits would none the less appeal to our hearts as symbols.

If we consider now the transition from the belief in an all-loving world to the agnostic position concerning this love of the universe towards us, then there remain three alternatives, the first to discard completely the idea, the second to keep it as a poetic conception, and the third to make our mind untrue to itself by pretending to know things on which it cannot help entertaining a full consciousness of its ignorance. Which of the three alternatives is best ? I certainly believe the second.

As to the second question of the Joint Editor, I consider that the antagonism between the heart and the mind springs into existence when the heart is not satisfied with a construction the mind offers it as a poetical hypothesis, as a beautiful possibility, but wants the mind to declare it an objective reality, a certain fact, when the intelligence knows it has not the sufficient *data*, the sufficient objective proofs, the necessary possibilities of verification to call it an objective reality. There is no antagonism when the mind says to the heart "you may take such or such an idea as a possibility and make it a subjective truth, a reality for you, provided you do not attempt to oblige me to endorse it as a verity corresponding to a fact in the objective world, when the exigencies of scientific proof are not satisfied."

Regarding the third question about the theological dogmas, I do not mean that all are incapable of demonstration and verification, but that some of them are so, and so much so, that the contrary to their affirmations have often been demonstrated, and can at any time be verified ! That, in regard to these dogmas that rest upon the infallibility of revelation, demonstration and verification were considered impious, and blind faith was its only possible stand ; it then had to desperately oppose what was called divine revelation to scientific investigations. The very idea of God, as popularly conceived, was that of an Omnipotent Being who has no law to obey, but whose capricious will, whatever it be, is law, which in turn may be interrupted, changed, or stopped at any moment he may choose to do so, so that fixed immutable natural laws which no will can change have quite naturally been considered a contradiction to the idea of Omnipotence and will ; thus dogmas and science were naturally at variance.

In answer to the fourth question, I do not see why the desire and search for happiness, when it does not mean our personal happiness, but the happiness of others, the happiness of the whole world that surrounds us, which is naught else than unity in love, or bliss, should not be a

permanent basis for a religion or an ethical system, because it then implies the characteristic double religious tie, first by unifying the inner impulses through the discipline necessary to make us capable of co-operating to that unselfish end, and secondly by uniting us to a greater collective Existence whose happiness we seek in universal unity.

Sociology answers the fifth question by showing that the egoistic instincts of men are antagonistic to each other, fight against each other, hindering or stopping thus their expansion, not in the individuals, but in the collective social body, while the altruistic tendencies unite together, having no essential antagonisms between them, because convergent in their aims, and so strengthen each other. Without going any deeper into this big question, which cannot be adequately treated here, we can nevertheless perceive that if this were not so, then the egoistic instincts, which are so much more strong in the primitive man than the altruistic, would have crushed these, and made social and even moral progress impossible. This is one of the most beautiful principles that show the power of development in the collective life of Humanity, and which it was Auguste Comte's glory to have demonstrated.

In answer to J. B. M's letter in the February *Pilgrim*, I would certainly agree that the mind, or rather the intelligence alone, disconnected from our higher and nobler capacities of Love, is not only a useless, but also a cold and callous power to carry us through the labyrinth of existence. But it is not so at all, when the intelligence works under the guidance and inspiration of the pure and loving heart ; then it is a part of the divine instrumentality of progress. Then it is the light of the heart and its wise minister and counsellor, and helps the forces of character to carry into realisation the promptings of love ; then it becomes indispensable to service, the fulfilment of love, without which our best feelings might perhaps often remain barren aspirations incapable of 'good deeds.' But I certainly do not hold that whatever is conceived in the mind is wrong ; the criterion of the truth of our subjective conceptions lies in the degree of their correspondence to the outer world, the material and the moral world outside our own mind. This correspondence may generally be improved with greater experience and power of thought so that our knowledge is open to progress ; this makes us conscious that our knowledge is not absolute, but only approaches more and more to Truth, without perhaps ever being capable of reaching the Absolute Truth ; but for all that, we need not disparage the relative truth or knowledge we are allowed

to reach; it has its majestic beauty and beneficent power, for which we ought to learn to be ever more and more grateful to Humanity for having revealed it to us. Though our knowledge is but a constant approximation to the Truth, we need not consider it as being *wrong*, but *right* relatively to us; it *is* the Truth relatively to us. But J. B. M. may perhaps quite agree that when we realise the *relativity* of our knowledge, we achieve a great progress, at once intellectual and moral, the one in seeing our limitations, the other in gaining more humility that is so necessary to counteract the infatuation which we are so liable to gain with knowledge; this leaves indeed little room for bigotry and intolerance that are so fatally dangerous for love! Thus we shall guard ourselves from letting our religion defeat its own end by any fanatical conceit about the infallibility of our beliefs! Then we shall grow in sympathy with all those who care for high ideals, and for truth; if they may seem to be wrong to us, we shall remember that after all we also may be wrong, but that in sympathetic co-operation we may help each other to come nearer and nearer to Truth, which will always remain relative; this we can do, by opening up our minds to reason and our hearts to love, constantly searching after all the great teachings of the past, not simply waiting for the coming of any new World-Teacher, because in doing so we may only be too apt to make ourselves thoroughly incapable of learning the lessons of all those great and gigantic teachers that fill the past of Humanity with infinite glory.

In answer to M. L's letter in the *May Pilgrim* I would submit that there exist certain conceptions that we may deliberately recognise as only imaginary, idealistic or perhaps utopic, that have the greatest influence on our lives, as for instance when we are earnestly and devoutly desirous to approach a high ideal as near as we can, even were we to be convinced that its complete realisation is simply impossible for us; we then worship a conception we know is not a reality. Secondly, that we must have the moral courage to distinguish between those conceptions we may honestly say we know, and those we are not seriously authorised to say we know. It is very good for us to admit that in regard to certain things we are wanting positive *knowledge* about them, and that till now at least we can only hold a *hypothesis* about them, a hypothesis which the heart is allowed to make as beautiful and lovely as is consistent with the *data* registered by the intelligence. When the heart has thus accepted the control of the intelligence, then the intelligence co-operates actively



with the heart in building up these poetical hypotheses. Some people imagine that when the heart must so act under the supervision and control of the intelligence, no high and beautiful ideals can be attained, but they are greatly mistaken. This union and co-operation is not only capable of giving ideals as high as those attained by the unbridled wanderings of the heart alone, but higher and nobler ideals still. When thus constructed, we still do not say our conceptions are objectively true, though they may perchance be so, as they have nothing which the scientific mind rejects, but we can firmly believe in them as subjectively true, as they are built on reason, on beauty and on love, combined together for the service of Humanity and for the expansion of our love for the beautiful universe. When prompted by beauty or love, our conceptions may go beyond the discoveries of reason, though never contradicting them, without blinding us as to the actual fact of such an extension, which has nothing that is contrary to truth, but is a simple adornment of it. I believe that after the explanations given above, no one will persist in thinking that there is any insincerity or self-deception in the stated trend of mind, as it is quite misleading to think that it amounts to letting one side of our nature accept and cherish a conception which another side knows to be untrue. When we religiously grant as a helpful and useful belief that nature and the universe love us, though we do not positively and scientifically know it to be so, we yet know that both nature and the universe are favourable to our existence and development, and therefore we may well consider ourselves entitled to believe that the outer world actually loves us, as we know nothing to the contrary. But I do think that there is real self-deception when the heart is allowed to say to the mind, "You must admit this idea as a positive truth, as a fact, though there be no scientific proof for it at all and though you cannot find any reason for it; even though you find it contrary to truth you must admit it." I cannot help thinking that there is a great danger of unconscious self-deception in the idea that dogmas that seem to be decidedly contradicted by scientific discoveries, can yet be demonstrated to those who adopt the right methods, as these methods seem to imply a previous auto-suggestion which thwarts the independent control of the mind. Besides, most of the supernatural dogmas were held to be capable of such demonstrations in the West as well as in the East, and yet some of them flatly contradict each other. Then again I believe it is wrong to say that the deepest religious truths are out of the sphere of the mind's



examination, though it is right to say that the mind alone cannot reach them. These can only be attained by the close combination of the intellectual and affective capacities of man, which need for their combination and development selflessness and purity of life. It is only then that we attain to the highest and most important truths, which form in their *ensemble* the Divine Wisdom, or the Knowledge of Love revealed to us by the positive sciences of Sociology and Morals.

Before closing this too long letter, I would like to make quite clear that I do not deny that there may be much that our Positive Philosophy of to-day does not even dream of, and that new faculties may perhaps be developed that will enable mankind to reach these undreamed-of truths, which Positivists will be most willing to welcome, as soon as they can be thoroughly satisfied as to their reality. What I wish to emphasise is that, while these new faculties are being developed, the new sciences founded, or the old and forgotten ones of antiquity reinstated, positive minds feel the need of a solid basis for their religious standing, and that they can only find this firm and granitic foundation of religion in the Positive Philosophy, in which they feel confident, because it is scientific and perfectible, relative and progressive, reposing not on the dawning science of to-morrow, nor even on the sensational science of to-day, which some people pride themselves on following, as others may pride themselves on following any other fashion of the day, but on the complete mental and scientific evolution of the past; Positivists therefore humbly prefer staying scientifically a good day backward, and only try to incorporate into their religious philosophy the sufficiently well established science of yesterday. Positivists confidently leave to well qualified specialists the task of making further research and investigations into those questions that may become scientific some day, but which meanwhile are only too apt to be exploited by charlatanistic propensities which cover them with a glamour which is often morally unhealthy. I cannot help experiencing a deep feeling of regret when I see people who are ever so eager to know the yet unveiled sciences of to-morrow or the lost sciences of ages and ages ago, take so little interest in the philosophic synthesis of the maturely established sciences of yesterday and of the known past; few people have indeed taken the trouble to realise how full and ripe they are of the most important bearings on our religious life, when properly synthesised.

PAUL EDGER.

## STRAY NOTES.

Members and friends of the League are requested to note our change of address. We are now domiciled in a small garden close to the Central Hindu College, and our postal address is Kamacha, Benares City. The garden is not so large nor is the locality so quiet as Sudhâkânan, but nevertheless it is a good place, and on the whole the position is more convenient. There is not as much accommodation as we should like, but as much as can be expected for our slender means. The Joint General Secretary has her home there, also the office for the League and the *Pilgrim*; there will be a small reading-room, and a room that can be used by an Indian guest, though it is not adapted for European ways. A very pure-living and learned Sannyâsi has been living in the corner of the garden for some ten or twelve years, so we have come into a very good mental and spiritual atmosphere.

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We have received some further letters from our good correspondent, the Marchioness of Lomellini and Tabarca, on the subject of vivisection. The Marchioness, who, we are glad to learn (though indeed we expected no less), neither eats meat, nor wears fur or feathers, writes that she fails to see how anyone who practises or upholds vivisection *can* be a true Theosophist. If by "Theosophist" she means one who has *realised* the unity of all beings, we quite agree with her, for such a one would not only be incapable of any form of cruelty, but would also have attained to knowledge which would show the futility of vivisection. But if she uses "Theosophist" in the ordinary sense of one who appreciates the ideal of universal brotherhood and tries to live accordingly, then we do not quite hold with her. The whole question seems to us to depend on the honest belief of the individual as to whether the practice is really useful or not. If by the suffering of a certain number of animals, *and by that method alone*, means could be discovered whereby many human lives would be saved, then probably many people, by no means open to the charge of cruelty, would consider the suffering justifiable, however much they would deplore what

would *to them* appear to be the necessity for it; and one who takes up this position *from honest conviction*, as we believe some do, may, it seems to us, be nevertheless devoted to the ideal of universal brotherhood.

There are not a few, however, who think that we have no right, in any case, to purchase our own health, or even life, at the cost of so much suffering to animals; and this seems to us a far higher standpoint. The real test of the sincerity of those of us who take this stand, however, would be if our own lives were in mortal danger from some disease for which the medical world believes the only remedy to be something which has been discovered by means of vivisection. What should we do under such circumstances? In any case, there seems to us to be little doubt that the most useful and effective of the efforts of anti-vivisectionists are those which are directed to showing that the practice does not really lead to any satisfactory results. This argument will appeal to all, and, provided it could be established, even if only to the extent of probability (as we believe it will be at no very distant date), we cannot conceive that *anyone* would be found who would uphold vivisection.

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The opening of the Palace of Peace at the Hague at the end of August is a pleasant event for all who wish to see the ideal of universal brotherhood realised. The origin of it is of course known to all; how at the first Hague Conference in 1899 a Permanent Court of Arbitration was established, and how Mr. Carnegie gave the Dutch Government the sum of one and a half million dollars to erect and maintain at the Hague a Court-house and Library for this Court. No pains have been spared in order to make this Palace as worthy as possible of the high purpose it has to serve; and it has been embellished with characteristic gifts from all the chief nations of the world.

No one would of course wish for one moment to disparage Mr. Carnegie's generosity, but the following extract from the *Christian Commonwealth* for Sept. 3rd throws a rather interesting and suggestive side-light on the matter:—

“Within the past few days every newspaper in the world of any importance has been full of praise of Mr. Andrew Carnegie's generosity in employing a portion of his wealth in the building of the Peace Palace of the Hague. No one apparently has noticed the irony which lies in the fact that Mr. Carnegie's millions are directly derived from the trade in armaments. Within the last twenty-five years a law was passed by Congress, practically giving the Steel Trust a monopoly in supplying the

United States with steel plates and other war fittings. Mr. Carnegie, as one of the heads of the Trust, acknowledged before a committee of investigation that his share of the net profits in less than ten years had aggregated 60,000,000, dollars, or £12,000,000 ; so that, even had he devoted 10 p.c. of that sum to peace purposes, that would only constitute the tithe of Scripture. These widely heralded gifts stand out in contrast with the humble efforts of the late Sir Randall Cremer. He, a poor man, might well have considered the Nobel Prize bestowed on him as a well-earned reward for his life-long labours, to be used for his own and his family's enjoyment. Instead of that, he turned over the whole of it to the promotion of the cause of peace. It is the story of the widow with her two mites over again."

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The following extract is from a letter to the *Daily Telegraph*, London, from the eminent physician, Dr. George Barlow :—

"For seven or eight years I have been conducting a series of very careful experiments upon light, in which several scientific men, of acknowledged position and capacity, have kindly assisted me. I have been able to prove to them that there are in the region of light, some quite definite objects and appearances, many of them exceedingly beautiful, which the known laws of light do not explain.

The subject is complicated and difficult, and I can only venture briefly to touch upon it. I may say, however, that the net result appears to me to be that the phenomena of light, which the wave theory attributes to the impact upon the retina of ether-vibrations, are in reality due to a much more complex agency ; due, in fact to the ceaseless action upon the eye of a living, intensely active, amazingly plastic, corpuscular substance, as yet unknown to science. This substance, which can be seen with the microscope, and, under certain conditions, with the trained naked eye, I have provisionally named 'photoplasma.'

As seen by the eye, this photoplasma takes the form of an infinite number of discs, all of precisely the same size, covered with an endless series of very beautiful concentric rings, varied by extremely well-defined cruciform structures. No man of science to whom I have shown these discs has as yet been able to explain them. It was at first suggested that we were looking at a projected image of the epithelial layer of the eye, but this explanation has been finally abandoned.

The whole mass of photoplasma seems to be imbued with intense vitality. The brilliant centres of the concentric rings fling out what appear to be marvellously delicate filaments, which, in my opinion, are ceaselessly engaged in sweeping minute bacteria into the black gulfs formed by the occasional wide expansions of the rings."

Students of the *Secret Doctrine* will be reminded of many hints given by H. P. B. that light and heat, and all the various forms of energy, are not modes of motion merely, but aspects of substance. It will be interesting to see how far Dr. Barlow's theory is upheld by further investigation.

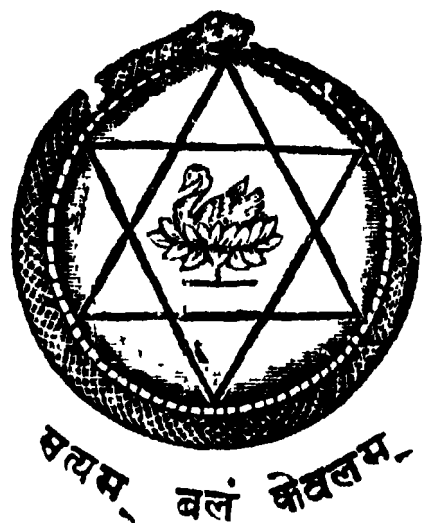
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It is interesting to compare the following thoughts on intuition with the thoughts of "S. T." on the same subject in this present issue :—

"We are being reminded on all sides that in our commerce with reality the intellect plays a very secondary part. Intellect gives us view of things, not touch with the manifesting life. It gives us aspects of reality, not contact with reality. . . . Is there a faculty, then, which can give us naked touch on reality itself? Are we being advised to cultivate intellect less and intuition more? Is intuition a lost faculty which we ought to try and recover? Did we leave it behind us, a long way back, somewhere near to the fork at which the human branched off from the sub-human? No, I do not like this idea of different faculties. It is not, I think, accurate psychology. Wordsworth seems to come near to the truth when he speaks of—

That blessed mood,  
In which the burthen of the mystery,  
In which the heavy and the weary weight  
Of all this unintelligible world  
Is lightened ; that serene and blessed mood,  
In which th' affections gently lead us on,  
Until the breath of this corporeal frame,  
And even the motion of our human blood,  
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep  
In body, and become a living soul ;  
While with an eye made quiet by the power  
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,  
We see into the life of things.

It is this "seeing into the life of things" which the intellect cannot help us to, and it is precisely from this vision, which is the thing that constantly recreates the world, that intellectualism tends to shut us out. But that which gives it to us is not another faculty, another kind of eye, or even the "astral eye" of the occultists, but rather a "mood," that is to say, a certain simple, receptive, quiescent, trustful, accepting attitude of the whole personality. What we call "intuition" is the effect of a certain orientation of the whole personality towards the universe. It is the whole personality, acting as a whole and responding as a whole to the life that enfolds it. . . . If "intuition" be, then, the effect of a certain attitude of the whole personality, can we say what that attitude is? Jesus describes it as that of a little child...A little child cannot judge, or reason, or criticise or discriminate ; it just responds simply, directly, and as a whole unit to the complete circumstance of the moment, which has a bigger content than we can see or than we may think. It is this simple, single, direct, unitary reaction of the whole personality upon the presented situation which is the ground and cause of that non-rational, sometimes apparently irrational, and sometimes supra-rational power which we call insight, intuition, penetration, discernment, immediate perception not of a fact but of the life-stuff which manifests in the fact," (K. W. H. in the *Christian Commonwealth*).



# THE PILGRIM.

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## A TALK ON BOEHME AND THE “DIALOGUES OF THE SUPERSENSUAL LIFE.”

It is impossible within the limits of a short article to do more than suggest the main lines of thought amidst the wealth of wisdom to be found in this little book, which can be bought for the paltry sum of 3s. 6d. But I have been asked to contribute a paper on it, having already spoken on the same subject to members of the League, and with all diffidence, I venture to give you what, after two years' close study, seems to me the principal teaching of the great mystic in these *Dialogues*.

I should like first of all to say a few words about his outward life. It is simplicity itself, and may be familiar to you all. If so, I hope you will pardon the repetition of it.

Jacob Böhme's condition was lowly, he was born in 1575, the son of poor peasant people, at Alt Seidenberg, a village among pastoral hills near Görlitz in Lusatia, Germany. As a boy he was apprenticed to a shoemaker, being considered too delicate for work in the fields. All the force, the virility of his nature, seems to have expended itself on his inner life.

Physically he was small and frail, and his outer life was simple and devoid of incident, save for the persecution he received, in company with other mystics, at the hands of so-called orthodoxy, since by birth and baptism he was a member of the Lutheran Protestant Church.

The experiences of his inner life date from a casual order given by a stranger for some boots. Jacob was then only a young apprentice, and the master being out, he asked an excessive figure, hoping in this manner to get rid of his customer. The man, however, paid the price, and, when he had left the shop, he called out:—"Jacob, come forth." Jacob obeyed the call, and the stranger, looking at him with kind and earnest eyes, said:—"Jacob, thou art as yet but little, but the time will come when thou shalt be great, and the world shall marvel at thee. Therefore be pious, fear God, and reverence His Word; especially read diligently the Holy Scriptures, where thou shalt find comfort and instruction, for thou must endure much misery and poverty, and suffer persecution. But be courageous and persevere, for God loves and is gracious unto thee." So saying, the stranger held his hand for a moment, and went his way.

This was the first definite call, and all Böhme's religious experiences date from this visit. In the same way Madame Guyon, the great French mystic, born nearly a hundred years later, dates all her spiritual experience from a visit to a monk, to whom as a young bride of eighteen she told her religious troubles. This monk in reply said only these few words:—"Madame, it is because you are seeking without what you have within. Accustom yourself to seek God *in* your heart, and you will find Him there."

There is no doubt that these so-called casual visits must have been supernaturally directed by the higher powers, and that they were the appointed means by which the call of God was heard in the soul. Notice too, the difference in the advice

given : Madame Guyon, the pious Catholic, accustomed to the outward ritual of the sacramental system of the Roman Church, was told to look for God within her own heart ; Böhme, the Protestant, already concentrating on inner belief, was told to search the Scriptures in order to gain knowledge and gather comfort and strength for future persecution.

After this visit he became very quiet and studious, and reproved others for speaking lightly on sacred things. For this, curiously enough, he was dismissed, the Master telling him that he would have no ' house prophet ' to bring trouble amongst his people. Thus Jacob was forced to go forth into the world, and become a travelling journeyman shoemaker, and was by this means brought more closely in touch with the beauties and wonders of Nature, which kindled his imagination and inspired him with profound piety.

The world of men appeared to him as a Babel of discordant noises, and he himself was sometimes afflicted with doubts and difficulties. But he clung to prayer and the study of the Scriptures, wherein he found much comfort.

His first mystical experience is what he calls a " Sabbath of the Soul." He was engaged for a time by a master shoemaker, and it was during this period of his life that he was lifted into a state of blessed peace, " a Sabbath of the Soul," that lasted for seven days, during which he was, as it were, " inwardly surrounded by a Divine Light." He writes :—" The triumph that was in my soul I can neither tell nor describe, I can only liken it to a resurrection from the dead."

In 1594 he became a master shoemaker, married a tradesman's daughter, and had four children. I think this fact is interesting, because it is a proof that the highest spiritual experiences are possible under normal conditions : that they do not require either an enforced celibacy, nor separation from the ordinary occupations of life.

In 1600, six years after this marriage, he had his second



mystical experience. He was looking at a pewter dish, which reflected the sunshine with such splendour, that he fell into a deep inward ecstasy, and it seemed to him as if he could now look into the principles and deepest foundations of things.

Fearing that it might be only fancy, he got up from his work, and went out into the fields. But he found that there too he seemed to gaze into the very heart of things; the inner, the true life of the trees, the herbs, and the grass was revealed to him, and he found that all nature harmonised with the vision he had seen in his ecstasy.

This seems to me a very clear instance of the development of the Cosmic Consciousness, since here, for the time, at all events, the veil of appearance was drawn aside, and the soul knew the essential unity of all that is. Böhme says, when relating this vision, that he felt a deep peace and a sense of being one with all, but he said nothing about it at the time, he only prayed and thanked God in silence.

In 1610, at the age of thirty-five, he began to write, for he then realised that all that he had seen in a fragmentary way was forming itself into a coherent whole. He felt a longing to write it down, not for publication, but as a memorial for himself. He wrote morning and evening, before and after his ordinary work, and he called this first work *Aurora* or *Morning Redness*.

A nobleman who happened to read these notes was so struck with them, that he had some copies made, and one of these fell into the hands of a Lutheran clergyman, who thenceforth became the bitterest opponent of Böhme, and assailed him from the pulpit as a dangerous heretic, until finally Böhme was summoned before the magistrates and forbidden to write. This command he obeyed for some years, but the inner force was too strong for him. He reflected with dismay that his one talent was being stifled, and eventually he decided to brave the outward authorities, and follow the

guidance of the inner voice. So from the year 1619 to 1624, when he died at the age of forty-nine, he poured out his stored-up thoughts in a series of books, of which the *Dialogues of the Supersensual Life* was the latest.

Having again become an object of attack for the Lutheran Church, he was obliged to go into exile, and it was while staying in the house of a nobleman in Silesia that he was taken fatally ill. At his own request he was sent home to Görlitz, where he died. Some hours before his death he was conscious of the most heavenly music being played in his room, and was astonished that his sons and wife could hear nothing. He also knew the exact hour at which his soul would depart, and at six in the morning he suddenly bade them farewell with a smile, and said:—"Now I go hence into Paradise." Thus calmly and without a fear he yielded up his spirit.

So this great soul passed into the Unseen, leaving behind him a wealth of mystical writings, from which both the learned and the devout have gathered much treasure. William Law in England, St. Martin, the French philosopher of the Revolution, and many others have owned him as their teacher.

We now come to the consideration of the *Dialogues of the Supersensual Life*, which was the latest of his works. It was translated from the original German by William Law, and found in MS. after his death. It belongs rather to the ethical side of Böhme's teaching than to the cosmogonical, and for that reason it is more helpful to the average student, and there is less obscurity of style to conquer.

Before passing to the *Supersensual Life* itself, I should like to give you Böhme's idea of the soul. To him the soul is a magic fire, derived out of God's Essence, *lumen de lumine*, and imprisoned in darkness. Its special characteristic is that it possesses will or desire, and it is aided by a mirror of understanding or imagination. Will or desire is of the very essence of the soul, inseparable from its existence. But there

are two diverse attractions to the will or desire. There is the Centre of Divine Light and Love, God, from Whom the soul came forth, and of Whom it is a fragment ; and there is the world of material things, in which it is immeshed. From the conflict of these two diverse attractions arise all the experiences and struggles of the spiritual life. Böhme maintains that, being derived from God, the soul has an incessant desire to return to the Light Centre, and, however that desire may be temporarily crushed by the contrary attractions of the material world, it is really always there, and becomes eventually a fire of anguish, until, united to its Centre, it becomes a fire of love. He says :—

“The eternal darkness of the soul is Hell, is an aching sense of anguish, which is called the anger of God, but the eternal light in the soul is the Kingdom of Heaven, where the fiery anguish of darkness is turned into joy. The fire in the light is a fire of love, but the fire in the darkness is a fire of anguish. The fire is painful and consuming, but light is yielding, friendly, powerful, a sweet and amiable joy.”

The soul becomes a fire of love, when it pierces through its self-prison and burns freely and softly in union with the Divine Love. This is called the ‘New Birth.’

To illustrate this spiritual truth, he takes as a symbol the seed in the earth. The seed is a germ of the sun-life, it has the air and light of this life enclosed in it, that is the mystery of its life. But the seed waits in the darkness of the earth through the winter months, till it feels the warmth of the sunlight pulsing through the earth-fibres that surround it ; then, shaking off the husk or gross part, which falls into a state of corruption or death, it pushes its way up through the imprisoning though nourishing earth, and wins access to the freedom of air and light, where it expands to its full growth and beauty. It is important here to notice that there are two attractions ; first, the desire of the sun for its own offspring, the little germ of sun-life buried in the earth ; and secondly, the desire of the seed for the sun, the desire to get into touch with its power, and with the light and air which belong to its

manifestation. It is from this desire of union on both sides that vegetable life arises. But this desire cannot be fulfilled till the husk and gross part of the seed falls into disuse ; till this begins, the mystery of life cannot come forth. Böhme argues that correspondingly in the soul-sphere there are the two attractions.

The soul, the *funklein* of the Eternal Light, longs, when it is awakened by the pulsation of the Divine Life, to get into closer union with that Light-Centre from which it came forth. But this Light-Centre is not a dead thing, it is the pulsing heart of God, which longs to bring all the separated fragments of its being back into conscious union with itself. Like the physical sun, it acts by stirring up in each soul its own imprisoned heart or life, and so brings to pass what may rightly be called the flower and fruit of the soul.

We see this side of the law of attraction illustrated in Thompson's poem *The Hound of Heaven*, where the soul is, as it were, pursued by God through all spheres of being, till finally, finding itself deserted by all, finding, in other words, that nothing in the outer world can give satisfaction, it turns within to find God, the One, and is at peace.

It is on this great law of attraction, the truth that nothing can relieve us or set us right but the turning of the will of our mind and the desire of our heart back to God," that the four great *Dialogues of the Supersensual Life* are written.

Thus the essence of Böhme's teaching is that the soul incarnate in man is an eternal being, that it is a source of joy or anguish, according as it is turned to or turned from the Light-Centre, which is the source of its life.

In the *Dialogues*, which are carried on between the Master and his disciple, the soul of man under the guise of the disciple is ever seeking to know how, whilst immersed in matter, it can get back into union with its Light-Centre which is God ; the Master answers all the difficulties, and teaches

the soul the Divine Wisdom by which this goal can be attained.

In the first *Dialogue*, in the first three questions, we get at the heart of the whole matter. The disciple said to the Master :—

“Sir, how may I come to the Supersensual Life, so that I may see God and may hear God speak?”

The Master answered and said :—

“Son, when thou canst throw thyself into THAT where no creature dwelleth, though it be but for a moment, then thou hearest what God speaketh.”

According to the Master, *That*, where no creature dwelleth, is within the soul, and the only thing that prevents the soul from realising the Divine Presence and hearing His voice, is its own thinking and willing on the plane of perception. The soul has to stand still from the thinking of self and the willing of self. The Master explains it thus :—

“When both thy intellect and will are quiet and passive to the expressions of the Eternal Word and Spirit ; and when thy soul is winged up and above that which is temporal, the outer senses and the imagination being locked up by holy abstraction, then the Eternal Hearing, Seeing and Speaking will be revealed to thee.”

This is surely the same as the divine command :—“Be still and know that I am God.” There must be the silence before the Divine Knowledge can be imparted. Here mystics all speak the same language. In the *Voice of the Silence*, that gem of Eastern wisdom, we find the same thought expressed in different words.

“Before the soul can hear, the image (man) must become as deaf to roarings as to whispers, to cries of bellowing elephants, as to the silvery buzzing of the golden firefly.”

And again :—

“The pupil must regain *the child-state he has lost* ere the first sound can fall upon his ear.”

Thus we see that these great powers of the soul (the will, the imagination, the intellect), as also the desires of the senses, these great powers which have taken an almost inconceivable

period of time to develop, have to be silenced and put on one side, before the soul, "naked as a new-born babe," can enter the Kingdom of Heaven and hear God speak. For, says Böhme :—

"It is naught indeed but thine own hearing and willing that do hinder thee, so that thou dost not hear God speak."

This, of course, means the hearing and willing of the lower separated self.

The reason of this is that, according to Böhme, when the soul attains to this state of utter simplicity and entire nakedness, it is in the state God was in before creation :—

"Son, when thou art quiet and silent, then art thou as God was before Nature and the Creation."

This is indeed the very ground of Being, where the unity alone can be apprehended.

In these passages, and in this teaching, Böhme really works out unconsciously the great theosophic doctrine of the two Paths; the outward or downward Path into matter, and the development of the selfhood through the limitations of personality, when the soul may be said to be under the dominion of Satan, the power that pushes outward into self-manifestation ; and the upward or return Path, where the soul is under the dominion of Christ, the unifying force which destroys the barriers of personality, and draws the soul back through the influence of love into the oneness of God. Here in the world the powers are set contrary one to another, because there are souls on the downward Path still developing the selfhood, still listening to and hearing the outer ; and there are other souls who have passed the nadir of materiality, who realise that nothing outer can satisfy them ; that God alone is their goal, and that to get into union with His Spirit is the one thing worth living for.

I think if Böhme had understood the doctrine of Reincarnation and of the two great Paths, he would have been

able to write more clearly, and would have been less disturbed by the self-seeking of the ordinary man, which he so constantly deplores. According to him our earthly sight prevents the soul from seeing with God, and our human willing from God willing through us.

Personally I cannot believe that these great powers of the human soul, the will, the intellect, the imagination, are useless on the upward Path ; rather do I hold that through the process of self-surrender, after the moment of nakedness, they are gradually transmuted, and, no longer being used to serve the separated self, they become the instruments by which the soul serves the All. "I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister," said the Christ, and in Him we do not find an absence of will or desire or intellect or imagination, but all these great powers are sublimated and consecrated to the service of mankind, in defiance of the will of the separated self. "Not my will, but Thine, be done," can surely have no other meaning but this, that the lower separated will finally yields itself absolutely, and is transmuted into the Divine, in the service of the All.

Are Nature and the Creation then great mistakes ? We are tempted at first sight to think that Böhme certainly considered them so, since he maintains that all the powers of Nature have to be silenced, in order to get back into union with the Divine Light, of which the human soul is but a fragment. But deeper study of his writings shows that, though he recognised the Fall as due to man's pride and self-seeking, he yet considered that our life here is a necessary education, and that, through the conflict with the illusions of the senses, the soul attains to its truest beauty and dignity.

If this be true, then the Fall was merely, from the race's standpoint, "*reculer pour mieux sauter*." \* For, according to his philosophy, it is the Divine will that we go through

\* That is, retreating, in order the better to take a leap forward,

this education, and he gives the disciple three rules, by obedience to which the soul may come through Nature into the supersensual and supernatural ground of the being of God.

These three rules are :—

1. *To resign the will to God.* This is, I suppose, the accepting of the limitations of our human life, and trying to learn its lessons by right use of experience.

2. *To hate one's own earthly will.*

3. *To bow the soul under the cross,* heartily submitting to it, that one may be able to bear the temptations of Nature.

In all Böhme's teaching it is the *will* that is the important thing, and in the consecration of the will, even the poor body is eventually purified ; for in one passage the Master tells the disciple :—

“ Be not thou conformed to the world, but be thou transformed by the renewing of thy mind, which renewed mind is to have dominion over the body, so that thou mayest prove both in body and mind what is the perfect will of God. . . . And thus thy very body is become the temple of God and of His Spirit in imitation of thy Lord's body.”

Again, when in the second *Dialogue*, the disciple complains that he has spent the night in prayer and tried to enter into “*That* where no creature dwelleth,” that he might hear the voice of God, but “that he neither heard nor saw as he should,” the answer the Master gives is the same, that it is the creaturely will which forms the partition, and this can only be removed by the grace of self-denial and perfect conformity to the Divine Will.

Here we see that when Böhme speaks of will he means that synthesis of will and desire of which all mystics have written ; for truly we could never *will* to die to all natural attractions, unless there was a keen love or desire to be made one with the Divine.

Personally I think this love and desire for God does not arise till all the lessons of selfhood have been learned. It was not till the ‘great famine’ befell, that the prodigal arose



to return to the Father. And what is the 'great famine,' but the realisation of the vanity of the outer, of its powerlessness to satisfy the needs of the soul?

To strengthen the will and desire for God, Böhme suggests that once every hour we should throw the Soul by an act of faith beyond all creatures and all sensual perception; for the creaturely will, he maintains, cannot be broken by the disciple's own efforts, but only by the light and grace of God. So much does he think of the will, that for him heaven is the turning in of the will to the love of God, and hell the turning in of the will to the anger of God. The anger of God is but the other side of His love, as fire is either a source of light and warmth or of burning and destruction, according to how we use it.

"Understand what Heaven is. It is but the turning in of the will to the love of God. Wheresoever thou findest God manifesting Himself in love, there thou findest heaven without travelling so much as one foot, and hell is but the turning in of the will to the wrath of God, for wheresoever the anger of God doth more or less manifest itself there certainly is more or less of hell, in whatsoever place it be."

The first two dialogues of the "*Supersensual Life*" deal almost entirely with this question of the turning in of the will into the light and love of God. The disciple is ever asking how he may pass through Nature into the supernatural and supersensual ground, where the true Light doth arise, and the Master is ever showing in different words the way to the attainment of this goal. But the central idea is ever the same, the transmutation of the will; and this is realised, not so much by the disciple's own effort, as by a surrender of the soul to the grace of God.

In the second *Dialogue*, in a very striking passage, the Master gives the disciple this advice:—

"Cease from thy own activity, and fix thy eyes on one point . . . gather in all thy thoughts, and by faith press into the centre, laying hold upon the Word of God which hath called thee. Be thou obedient to this call, and be silent before the Lord, sitting alone with Him in thy inmost hidden cell, thy mind being centrally united in itself, and attending His will in the patience of hope."

Here indeed is the transmutation, the restless human will, stayed, silent, before the Lord, no longer seeking anything for itself, but “attending His will in the patience of hope.”

It is impossible to understand Böhme’s teaching, unless one realises his central doctrine of the two wills; the inferior will pushing the soul to the things without, and the superior will drawing it to things within. In conjunction with the two wills are similarly the two eyes, also contrary one to the other; the left eye looking into time and guiding the inferior will, the right eye gazing into eternity and moulding the superior will.

According to his philosophy the two wills were originally placed one above the other, the superior will the lord, the inferior will in subservience to it; the contrary action seen in this world is due to the Fall.

The whole purpose of the Master’s teaching is to show the disciple how to arrive at the unity of will and the unity of vision. He does not advise him to leave the world and shut himself up in a cell or monastery, but rather to stay in the world, labour at his special employment, according to the best of his ability, yet keep ever in union with the Centre, where the Divine Will and the Divine Vision are realised.

His final injunction at the end of the second dialogue is as follows :—

“Keep therefore to the Centre, and stir not from the presence of God revealed within the soul; let the world and the devil make never so great a noise and bustle to draw thee out, mind them not; they cannot hurt thee . . . let the hands or the head labour, the heart ought nevertheless to rest in God. God is a Spirit, dwell in the Spirit, work in the Spirit, pray in the Spirit, do everything in the Spirit, for remember thou art Spirit and thereby created in the image of God.”

Thus, according to Böhme, the whole difference between light and darkness is to be found in the will. Is the will of man surrendered to the Divine Will, then the soul dwells in the light. Is the soul of man going forth to the material world in self-seeking, then does the Soul dwell in darkness.

*Self-seeking or self-surrender*—that is the whole secret of the spiritual life. It seems a little thing to prevent the attainment of the soul's true life, but it is sufficient ; for, as long as the soul of man is seeking *self*, it cannot find God, whereas, says the Master, "where the love of self is banished, there dwelleth the love of God." Why we do not find the love is because we are always seeking "somewhat," whereas the soul should seek nothing but God, and, realising its own nothingness, let God will through it.

"So much of the soul's own will as is dead unto itself, even so much room has the will of God, which is His love, taken up in that soul . . . where its own will did before sit, there is now *nothing*, and where *nothing* is, there it is that the will of God worketh alone."

This *nothing* is the resigned ground of the soul, where there is a *nothing* of self-seeking, and a total surrender of the will to God.

This must inevitably bring trial to the disciple, for it is absolutely contrary to the way of the world ; but through the patient endurance of these trials the soul gains strength.

At the end of the second dialogue Böhme finishes off in the following magnificent passage :—

"The way to the love of God is folly to the world, but is wisdom to the children of God. Hence, whenever the world perceiveth the holy fire of love in God's children, it concludeth immediately that they are turned fools and are beside themselves. But to the children of God that which is despised of the world is the greatest treasure ; yea, so great a treasure is it as no life can express, nor tongue so much as name what this enflaming, all-conquering love of God is. It is brighter than the sun ; it is sweeter than anything that is called sweet ; it is stronger than all strength ; it is more nutrimental than food ; more cheering to the heart than wine, more pleasant than all the joy and pleasantness of this world. Whoever obtaineth it is richer than any monarch on earth ; and he who getteth it is nobler than any emperor can be, and more potent and absolute than all power and authority."

E. T. HARRISON.

(*To be continued*)

## BHAKTI IN HINDUISM.

(Continued from p. 98.)

### IV.—KALI YUGA.

In the preceding chapter we have studied in some detail the doctrine of *Karma Bhâmi*, and seen what an extraordinary significance it imparts to *bhakti*. The whole land surface of the country may indeed be aptly compared to a huge *tîrtha*. Just as the *tîrtha* is a centre of holiest magnetism which the psychic can sense from a long distance, so the whole soil of India is a radiating centre of the highest creative influences which lend themselves to the creation of loftiest destinies. The action of the soil, through the medium of its creative influences, upon *bhakti* is to breathe upon its dry bones the breath of a higher life—to bring to it vigour, organisation, solidity, directness, concentration, bouyant hope, expanded outlook, kindling aspiration. An invisible but none the less real impulse, coursing through its frame, fires it with a new incentive, fortifies it with a new resolve, unites and consolidates its scattered energies, enriches it with a motive, and compels it to move to a single, intensely dynamic, overmastering purpose. It is a silent process of transfusion, of which the effect upon *bhakti* is transformation.

We have already indicated in the last chapter that *bhakti* in this land is acted upon by two distinct but allied types of formative influences, *viz.*, space and time. The action of the soil, which was studied in the last chapter, is the action of space influence. The action of *Kali Yuga* upon it is the action, typically, of time influence. It is the latter we propose to study in the present chapter.

The action of *Kali Yuga* upon everything in this land is, if possible, even more remarkable than the action of the soil. Its predominant characteristic is its extraordinary fecundity. If evil in this *yuga* is intensely, irresistibly prolific, so also is good. The aspirant to *bhakti* should make a careful note of the wonderful virtues which the *S'âstra* ascribes to the action of *Kali Yuga*; and he should thank his stars that he is born in a *yuga* which stands apart from its predecessors by the possession of such incredible creative powers. It is open to him now to sow the seeds of the loftiest destiny; the powers of *Kali* will at once nourish them, and clothe them with life and form. Now or never should be his watchword.

It is true the spirit of *Kali Yuga* is distinctly and essentially evil. The *Kalki Purânam* (Part I. Chap. I) traces its genealogy, from which it will appear from what a vile and abandoned parentage it has sprung. At the end of *pralaya*, from the back of *Brahmâ* the Creator issued His own Sin, dark and foul, which He endowed with life and form, and named *adharma* (impiety, unrighteousness). *Adharma* had a charming mate in *Mithyâ* (lie) who had the eyes of a cat. In time this blessed couple had an issue in *Dambha* (deceit or arrogance or wickedness), fiery and wrathful. He begot in his sister *Mâyâ* a son, *Lobha* (greed), and a daughter, *Nikriti* (baseness, dishonesty). From their union sprang a son, *Krodha* (wrath), and a daughter, *Himsâ* (injury, wrong) of blessed memory, the immortal parents of *Kali*, the present ruler of the life of men in this land. His portraiture is so graphic and rich in suggestiveness that it is to be hoped its indecency will be excused for the deep insight it affords into the ruling principles of conduct at the present day. He has his left hand always on his genital organ; his body is shining black like collyrium (black eye-paint) mixed with oil; he has a crow-like belly, a dreadful gaping mouth, and a protruding tongue. His whole appearance inspires terror. From his

whole body issues a repulsive putrid smell. His familiar haunt is gambling and drinking dens, brothels, and his favourite *protégés* are the dealers in gold.

The progeny which has sprung from *Kali* is quite as suggestive as his parentage. He married his sister, *Durukti* (shrew, shrewishness), who bore him a son, *Bhaya* (fear), and a daughter, *Mrityu* (death), from whose union arose *Niraya* (hell). He joined in holy wedlock with his sister, *Yâtand* (suffering), who has borne him a modest family of children, and grand-children who can be counted by the million.

Such is the genealogy of *Kali*, the sovereign ruler of the cycle of 432,000 years which now casts its lurid and fateful shadow over this land. Of this unconscionably long duration five thousand years have just elapsed; the remaining 427,000 years are yet destined to drag their slow, silent and weary course before the star of *Satya Yuga* looms on the horizon. The spirit of a cycle which has an accursed parentage like that of *Kali* cannot but be evil. And the evil of *Kali* is of that sinister and malignant type which works like an obsession. In the evil of *Tretâ* and *Drâpara* there is a strain of grandeur; in some of the characters which live immortalised in the canvas of Vyâsa, it reaches the level of heroism. But the evil of *Kali* is essentially petty and despicable. There is not one gleam of heroism, of honour, to relieve its background of cowardice, baseness, selfishness, hypocrisy, corruption. The best condensed account of *Kali Yuga* is perhaps that of the *Bhâgavatam* (Skandha XII, Chap. III), of which a somewhat free translation is given below.

In *Satya Yuga dharma* is a full unit. In the allegorical account of the *Purânas dharma* is a quadruped, having its four feet consisting of *satya* (truth), *dayâ* (compassion, kindness), *tapas* (austerity), *dâna* (charity) intact. The *Satya Yuga* humanity possesses the following among other characteristic virtues, contentment, compassion, friendliness,

control of senses and body, endurance, search for self-knowledge (or delight in self), impartiality of view. In this age the senses, mind, *buddhi*, spontaneously tend to *sattva guna*, which distinguishes it from its successors. Accordingly, the natural bias of the mind in this serene and virtuous age is towards the practice of *tapas* and the search for *jñānam*.

In *Tretā Yuga* *dharma* loses one out of his four feet, and *adharma*, its dark shadow, prevails. And since *adharma* (unrighteousness) is negative *dharma*, or, in other words, the negative image of *dharma*, it too logically must be a quadruped. And so the four feet of *adharma* consist respectively of *anrita* (falsehood), *himsā* (injury), *asantosha* (discontent) and *vigraha* (hostility). With the advent of *Tretā Yuga*, for the first time ensues a prolonged and incessant conflict between the guardian virtues of *dharma* and the bloodhounds of *adharma*. In this fierce hand-to-hand encounter the quaternary of *dharma* are assailed by the quaternary of *adharma*, that is, truth is assailed by falsehood, compassion by injury or cruelty, *tapas* by discontent (contentment is the root principle of *tapas*), and charity by hostility. In the final issue, *dharma* is badly mauled, and loses one of his feet, *i.e.*, one quarter of his total efficacy.

We have seen that in *Satya Yuga* the general character of cosmic energy is pure *sattvam*. In *Tretā Yuga* it gradually and finally alters into pure *rajas*. *Rajas* is the principle of activity; it ceaselessly plies the soul with fiery incentives to precipitate itself into action. Accordingly in this *yuga* are born great souls—kings, warriors, highly evolved beings—who devote their energies to the pursuit of renown, and generally of *kāmya karma*, or actions which endow with concrete form, and liberate and exhaust the accumulated mass of desire (*vāsanā*) energy.

In *Dvāpara Yuga* cosmic energy takes the mixed form of *rajas* and *tamas*. The spirit of the *yuga* is characterised by

additional fierceness, and robs *dharma* of fully one half of its efficacy. The pursuit of *kâmya karma* becomes a delight, and greed, discontent, pride, arrogance, envy are passions which manifest in the mind.

*Kali Yuga* is abandoned to the grip of absolute, unredeemed *tamas*. One would fain drop the curtain upon its scene of naked horrors—it is all black, black. It repels, sickens, alienates, horrifies the soul. In this dark *yuga* the forces of *adharma* hold drunken orgies of iniquity, and *dharma*, struggling with one maimed foot, is stabbed to the heart, and in the end, expires with a groan. The retinue of *Kali* is composed of *mâyâ* (trickery) falsehood, sleepiness, sleep, cruelty, suffering, sorrow, confusion, fear, poor-spiritedness and other similar afflictions.

The three crying afflictions of life in this age are poverty, want and insecurity. The two great characteristics of *adharma* are hypocrisy and pretension. The structure of society will go into pieces in consequence of poverty and insecurity. The faithlessness of the wife, and the open immorality of other members of the family, will destroy the family bond, and lead to a universal break-up of the home. The people will be incessantly harrassed by robbers, wild animals, famine, drought and oppression. There will be quite an epidemic of murder and suicide. Aged parents and tender children will alike be forsaken. Deprived of home, food, sleep, bath, ornaments, the people will look like savages and *pisâchas*.

Such is the dark side of the picture of *Kali Yuga*. It sickens the soul by its catalogue of unmitigated horrors. But it has a bright side—so surprising, romantic, unlooked for, and withal so beneficent and fruitful, that it demands the most careful attention. A remarkable, and apparently insoluble feature of *Kali* is that in it contraries co-exist in absolute harmony. *Kali*, by universal agreement, is the age



of evil—of concentrated, distilled evil. Unrighteousness in *Kali* is a spontaneous and universal impulse, which bears its forbidden fruit in widespread misery, oppression, infidelity, irreligiousness, dissolution of home, disruption of society. It turns home into a den of wolves, and society into a congeries of broken, disorganised, disunited, separative units.

And yet, strange, enigmatic, bizarre, paradoxical as it may seem, *Kali* is extraordinarily indulgent to the forces of *dharma* :—

“ Without effort man acquires supremely great merit. Of *Kali*, tainted with innumerable drawbacks, this is the one great virtue.” (*Kârma Purânam* Part I. Chap. 29.)

This is the one supreme virtue of *Kali* which distinguishes the *yuga* from its predecessors. It is so beneficent and fruitful a virtue that on its account we are tempted to pardon the thousand and one evils which *Kali* possesses. The *Brahma Purânam* (Chap. 230), in a deeply suggestive passage, which will be dealt with presently, echoes the statement of the *Kârma* :—

“ In this *Kali* man obtains surpassing excellence in *dharma*. With a little effort (men become) proficient in *dharma*, whence I am pleased with *Kali*.”

In the *Vishnu Purânam* (Part VI. Chapter 2.) the whole of this passage is repeated word for word.

These extracts reveal a remarkable peculiarity in the cyclic action of *Kali Yuga* which is absolutely unmatched in its predecessors. We have seen that *Kali* communicates an extraordinary fecundity to *adharma*. We now see that it imparts an equally unprecedented productivity to *dharma*. In *Kali dharma* and *adharma*, good and evil, live and flourish side by side. A dark and baffling enigma! An inscrutable insoluble mystery!

Of this striking and unparalleled fertility which *Kali* imparts to *dharma*, the *Purânas*, with that illuminative fullness which sometimes characterises them, give both the comparative ratio, and the degree of relative and absolute

productiveness. It is a revelation so remarkable in the light it throws on the fecundity of *Kali* that it reads almost like a romance.

And first as to the comparative ratio of fertility which *dharma* bears in this *yuga*, the *Brahma Purānam* and the *Vishnu Purānam* have a passage which is common to both. And here it may be stated that the *Bhāgavatam* (Skandha XII. Chap. 3), the *Vāyu Purānam* (Chap. 58), the *Padma Purānam* (*Uttara Khandam*, Chap. 18, 19), and the *Vrihan-nāradiya Purānam* (Chap. 38), as well as other *Purānas*, give versions of the doctrine, which, agreeing in substance, differ only in words.

It is a singularly happy coincidence that in their enunciation of the doctrine of ratio—the doctrine, that is, of the increasing productivity of spiritual energy at a certain rate of progression—*Paurānic* authorities are, without exception, in absolute agreement. The best exposition, on the whole, of the doctrine is that given in the *Brahma Purānam* whose version, as already said, is identical with that of the *Vishnu Purānam*. The doctrine is so surpassingly important, so novel and suggestive, that it should be given in the exact words of the original.

“In one day and night in *Kali* man secures the fruit of *tapas*, of *brahmachirgya* (celibate purity), of *japam* (repetition of *mantras*), which he does in one month in *Dvāpara*, in one *āyana* (six months) in *Tretā*, in ten years in *Krita* (*Satya Yuga*).”

The infinite suggestiveness of the doctrine will perhaps appear more effective, if we put it in the reverse way. That which takes *ten years* to accomplish in *Satya Yuga*, is carried into effect in *six months* in *Tretā*, in *one month* in *Dvāpara*, and in *one day and night* in *Kali*.

As the *yugas* succeed one another with mathematical regularity and precision, spiritual energy gains increased mobility and added momentum, until in *Kali Yuga* it reaches a level of superb effectiveness. Take for instance a *mantra*.

In *Satya Yuga* everything is sluggish, almost stagnant ; the attitude of external nature is one of artistic lounge ; there is a delicious langour in the nerves which predisposes the soul to a silent and meditative communion. The stir and tumult and hard blows of creative *karma* are alien to the deepest sympathies of this *yuga*. Nature abhors an advance, which is therefore slow, tedious, uphill work. A *mantra* in this *yuga* may take ten years to master—ten long, weary, wistful years.

In *Tretâ Yuga* there is a swift and dramatic transformation. Spiritual energy acquires an enormous mobility. Nature pours a new electricity into the nerves, which become so astir with life and energy, that the *Satya Yuga mantra* yields mastery in the enormously shortened duration of six months ! The mobility which accrues to energy is astounding, incredible ! That which took one hundred and twenty months to master in *Satya Yuga*, takes no more than six months in *Tretâ*.

In *Dvâpara Yuga*, there is a further equally remarkable and abnormal accession of momentum. The period of mastery of the *mantra* is reduced from six months to *one* month. Imagine the stupendous difference in the creative power of energy between *Satya Yuga* with its quiescent languor which is lashed into action with incredible exertion, and which is heated in the fire of will continuously during ten weary long drawn out years before it softens into malleability, and *Dvâpara Yuga* with its rush of fiery energy, which has the mobility of a whirlwind, and which wrests from the obdurate and recalcitrant *mantra* its *siddhi* in the incredibly quick space of one short month.

Now, if energy in *Dvâpara Yuga* strikes us dumb with wonder by its mobility, what can adequately describe its creative power in *Kali Yuga* ? In *Kali* the nervous system is normally comparable to a galvanic battery. As the storage

of electricity in the battery is permanent, so is the accumulation of energy, in *Kali Yuga*, in the nerves. And, as in a battery of perfect workmanship the creation of the electric current is instantaneous, so in *Kali Yuga* is the almost spontaneous flow of energy in the nerves. Its manifestation is instantaneous, its momentum irresistible, awful. The rush of fiery energy which *Dvâpara* liberates is no better than the proverbial snail's pace in comparison with the motive power it acquires in *Kali*. With volcanic sweep it now crashes into *siddhi*. The velocity of *Dvâpara* is sheer procrastination to the headlong swiftness of *Kali*. *Dvâpara* dawdles over a whole livelong month in stumbling upon *siddhi*; *Kali* snatches it in one short day.

Such is the extraordinary, unprecedented, incredible productivity which energy possesses in *Kali Yuga*. It is important to note that this ratio is a purely mathematical one which assumes the absolute equality of all other conditions.

But the *Purânas* (the *Bhâgavatam*, the *Vishnu Purânam*, the *Brahma Purânam* etc.,) apply another and an intensely suggestive standard in measuring the superior productiveness of *Kali Yuga*. "That which is obtained by *dhyâna* (one-pointed contemplation) in *Krita* (*Satya Yuga*), by celebration of sacrifices in *Tretâ*, by worshipping in *Dvâpara*, is accomplished by glorification of (name of) *Kes'ava* (*S'rî Krishna Vishnu*) in *Kali*.

The first standard of comparison, be it noted, shows the superiority of *Kali* over the other *yugas* in the creative power of energy. Assuming all other conditions to be equal, it is shown that a given amount of energy will be liberated by *Kali Yuga* in a certain time, and that the same energy will be liberated by the other *yugas* in proportionately longer durations. In other words, the first standard of comparison, by means of arithmetical figures, demonstrates the remarkable *quantitative* superiority of *Kali* over the other *yugas*—the superiority, that is, in the production of a given *quantity* of energy.

The second standard of comparison—the one contained in the extract which has been quoted above—demonstrates the equally striking *qualitative* superiority of *Kali*. Assuming all other conditions to be equal, it shows that in the production of a given *spiritual* effect, the essentially low, crude, undeveloped physical energy in *Kali Yuga* is of *equal* efficacy to the highest *âtmic* energy in *Satya*.

*Dhyâna*, or contemplation, is a function of the mind-principle in its highest assimilation by *âtma*. In *Satya Yuga* the centre of gravity of Self normally tends to persist in what may be called the *âtmic* body. *Dhyâna*, therefore, in *Satya Yuga* is a concomitant function of the *âtmic* body, and liberates the highest type of human energy—the *âtmic*. In like manner, in *Tretâ Yuga* the centre of gravity of Self shifts down to the *kârana s'arîra*, which is the body chiefly concerned in the celebration of sacrifices (*yajñas*); for sacrifices are the invocation of the *Deva* hierarchy by means of *mantras*, of which the lowest limit of efficacy is the *kârana s'arîra*. In the *kârana* body the *mantra* is released from inertia and vivified into life and power; in all lower bodies it finds a prison-house which keeps it in all but complete obscurity.

In *Dvâpara Yuga* self-consciousness has its normal centre in the *sûkshma s'arîra*. The potentialities of this body find their ideal scope in *archanam*, worship. Just as in *Tretâ Yuga* the *kârana* body offers a peculiarly congenial soil for sacrifices, so in *Dvâpara* the *sûkshma* body offers a most apt and appropriate field for worship.

In *Kali Yuga* the centre, as well as the dense and opaque prison-house, of consciousness is the *sthûla* (physical) body. It is hardly necessary to add that *kirtanam*, glorification or repetition of the name of Deity, howsoever fervent and devout, exercises a kind of energy which is primarily physical. It is the energy which resides in sound.

We have thus in the four *yugas* four principal types of

energy, together with the bodies to which they correlate. There is *Satya Yuga*, with its *dhyānic* energy, which is excelled only by the energy of *samādhi*, of which the seat and centre is the *ātmic* body. Next, there is *Tretā Yuga* with its *yajña* energy, which resides in and is liberated by the *kāraṇa* body. *Dvāpara Yuga* comes next with its energy manifesting through *archanam*, worship, and having its seat in the *sūkshma* body. Lastly we have in *Kali Yuga* the energy of *kirtanam*, glorification, the grossest and most undeveloped type of energy, which is manufactured by the densest and outermost shell of Self—the *sthūla* (physical) body.

The text we have quoted above says that these divergent types of energy, differing widely among themselves as to character and momentum, possess equal productive power. That is to say, a *yajña* in *Tretā Yuga* confers the same *kārmic* results, possesses the same *kārmic* value as *dhyāna* in *Satya*. *Dhyāna* in *Satya Yuga* is distilled *ātmic* energy, while the energy which is liberated by a *yajña*, being distinctively *kāraṇa s'arīra* energy, is emphatically of an inferior type. That the inferior type of energy should possess equal efficacy with the superior is due to the extra productivity with which the spirit of the *Tretā Yuga* fecundates it.

The same remarkable increase in the productive power of energy is seen in *Dvāpara Yuga*; for in the altered spiritual conditions of this age *archanam* (worship) rivals the efficacy of *dhyāna* in *Satya Yuga*. The energy which is evolved by *archanam* belongs peculiarly to the type called *sūkshma s'arīra* energy, and is two degrees lower in quality than the energy of *dhyāna*. And yet this stupendous qualitative difference counts for nothing, for in the continually increasing accession of productivity which it receives from *Dvāpara*, *archanam* is endowed with equal creative power with *dhyāna*.

But the sensations which the extraordinary fecundity of

*Kali Yuga* causes in the mind are those of downright surprise and incredulity. In this amazingly prolific age *kirtanam* (glorification) accomplishes what could be obtained in *Satya Yuga* by the concentrated intensity of *dhyāna*. *Kirtanam* primarily exercises the throat and mouth, and liberates what is transparently physical energy, the grossest and lowest type of energy which inheres in Self. The grossest physical energy, then, in *Kali Yuga* equals in effect the purest spiritual in *Satya*. Mere sound-energy accomplishes in *Kali* what *dhyāna* alone could yield in *Satya Yuga*. This is surprising, weird, romantic, incredible.

If we seek for an explanation of this extraordinary phenomenon, we find it lies in the enormous development of sound. Sound in nature exists in four organic states or aspects—*parā*, *pas'yantī*, *madhyamā*, *vaikharī*. Sound in Hindu philosophy is *Brahman*, omnipresent, self-manifesting, the ensouling principle of the causes from which the universe springs into existence. In the human organism the first manifestation of sound in the *parā* form is in *mulādhāra chakra* where it is an indiscrete mass (*pindam*), motionless, without vibration, and exhibiting the colour of heated gold. Thence, along the canal of *sushumnā* (*Brahma*) *nādi*, it mounts to the region of the navel, where it manifests in its *pas'yantī* form, at which stage it develops a vibratory motion almost imperceptible. At both these stages sound retains its rigid, *tāmasic*, indiscrete unity. At the lotus of the heart it assumes its *madhyamā* form, which is the first definite stage of differentiation. But it is too subtle as yet to be amenable to physical audition.

From the heart, travelling along the canal of *sushumnā*, sound strikes for the cavity of *Brahman* (*Brāhmarandhrā*) in the brain, where once more it passes into unity in the form of the sacred *OM* (ॐ). This is the subtle, indiscrete, original, synthetic form of the Sanskrit alphabet. The letters



of the Sanskrit alphabet have their origin in *nāda-pranava*, and are ultimately resolved back into it. The cavity of *Brahman* is the terminus of the system of *chakras*. Upon reaching it, the sound current turns back, and, while still in the region of the brain, forms, in union with *Vyāna Vāyu*, the fourth and last variety of sound, viz. *vaikharī vāk*. As it strikes, in alliance with *Vyāna*, different parts of the brain, throat, mouth, etc., it is thrown into an exquisite variety of forms which become the letters of the alphabet. The Sanskrit alphabet has thus a perfectly natural and spontaneous origin; its letters are definite and immutable sound units, which are transformations of the one sound mass, the *nāda*, and are ultimately reabsorbed into it.

*Vaikharī vāk* thus represents the fourth and last development of sound. At its *parā* stage sound is an indiscrete unity; at *vaikharī* it is discrete multiplicity. At *parā* its potentialities are fast imprisoned in rigidity; at *vaikharī* they are completely unchained. The genial warmth of *vaikharī* liquefies its rigidity, dissolves it into its basic units, and forms them into romantic varieties of permutations. *Vaikharī vāk* forms the shoreless ocean of articulate speech.

There is a natural correspondence between the four forms of sound and the four *yugas*. In the *Satya Yuga* organism sound manifests in its *parā* form, in the *Tretā* in its *pas'yantī* form, in the *Dvāpara* in its *Madhyamā* form, and in the *Kali Yuga* organism, in its densest *vaikharī* form.

Note the intensely suggestive correspondence between *vaikharī* sound and *Kali Yuga*. In order fully to grasp it, it is necessary to bear in mind that a sound in nature is a force, and especially that each letter of the Sanskrit alphabet with a certain well-known combination is a seed (*viṣṇu*), of which the possibilities in a *mantram* are incalculable. What *Kali* is among the *Yugas*, that *vaikharī* is among the forms of sound—each in its own domain is the embodiment of maximum



differentiation. The spirit of *vaikharî vāk* promotes the emancipation of sound units. The spirit of *Kali Yuga* tends to the separation of all possible forms of units. The specific momentum of sound, coinciding with the generic momentum of the *yuga*, forms an accumulated mass, of which the effect on the letters of the alphabet—the elementary units of sound—is at once to form them into independent units and to release their imprisoned potentialities. The formation of independent sound units produces one remarkable and far-reaching effect. The force-potentialities which lie latent in each unit of sound—in each letter of the alphabet—can now take form and materialise. In actual fact, each letter of the Sanskrit alphabet, as said before, represents a root-force in nature of unlimited powers. These forces can be awakened, and their possibilities fully exploited only when the letters themselves have been disentangled from the complex mass and formed into organic entities.

And so the genius of *vaikharî vāk* helps to liberate sound, which the spirit of *Kali Yuga* fertilises and rejuvenates. In a former part of the chapter we have seen the prodigious quantitative superiority which *Kali* has over the other *yugas* in productive potentialities. It is this extraordinary, unheard-of fecundity, which it pours into sound, transforming it into a living power. It takes the unity of *pranava*, guides it to the physical plane, liquefies and dissolves it, and separates it off into units, clothes them in physical vestures, and breathes into them a fiery and resistless mobility.

Especially is the creative genius of *Kali Yuga* seen in the new power it brings to complex force-organisms. A *mantram* is a complete force-organism. In its ultimate analysis it consists of a definite number of letters of the alphabet, which, combined and arranged in certain orders, form what are called words; these in turn unite on a higher plane, in pursuance of similar methods, to form a complete thought or sentence. A

*mantram* is a complete thought. A word has a higher signification than a letter, and a sentence or complete thought than a word. In like manner, a word is an organised force which possesses a much higher creative power than a letter or elementary sound-force. A complete sentence or *mantram* is a highly complex force-organism which is endowed with a vastly higher constructive potency.

But the *mantram*, and its complex unit, the word, are energised, by the extraordinary fecundity which characterises *Kali Yuga*, into a new life. Such words as *S'iva* or *Hari* or *Durgā* or *Ganes'a* or *Suryya* possess a headlong power of propulsion which is phenomenal. We might without exaggeration compare them to the crater of a volcano in action. As from the crater in action issue molten streams of lava which possess a resistless sweep, so from these holy names in vibration issue eddies of fiery energy which possess a resistless impulse.

It is unquestionably true that the energy, which the name *Hari* or *Durgā* or *S'iva* releases, is primarily physical energy. But there is a magic in banned, derided, discredited *Kali* which quickens as well as transforms. And this vocal energy, which is transparently physical, is, in the process of its liberation, transmuted and redeemed into spiritual. For it lies dormant and stratified in a holy name. There is a power in a holy name which is above human ebb and flow ; which does not miss nor weary ; which is benediction and illumination ; which exalts and transmutes all things to its own essence. It turns evil into good, matter into spirit, inertia into motion, *tamas* into *sattvam*, bondage into release. Physical energy, by association with it, becomes spiritual. It is a change, not merely in degree, but in kind, not merely in quantity, but in quality. It is a transformation.

Thus the superiority of *Kali* over the other *yugas* is alike *quantitative* and *qualitative*. We have elsewhere seen that, if the productivity of energy in *Satya Yuga* be taken as unity,

in *Kali Yuga* it mounts to the stupendous ratio 3650. We now see that whatever is the productivity in *Satya Yuga* of the highest *dhyānic* energy, it is absolutely attained in *Kali Yuga* by the grossest physical energy.

Such is the virtue which resides in *Kali Yuga*. It is a virtue which borders on the magical, which is wonderful, marvellous, miraculous.

This concludes our review of the comparative productivity of *Kali Yuga*. Before concluding this chapter we must say a few words on the kindred question of its absolute productivity. There is a remarkable passage in the *Bhāgavatam* (Skandha XII. Chap. 3) which throws a flood of light upon it:—

“In Kali, the centre of vices, O king, there is one great virtue, (*viz.*,) from glorification of *Krishna*, released from attachment, (one) reaches the Supreme.”

In this passage the supreme virtue which resides in the Name, and which has been briefly alluded to above, is seen in its brightest light. It shows that it is in the power of the Name to give what *yoga* and *dhyāna*, and *jñānam* and *tapas* and *yajña* often fail to give, *viz.*, *mukti*. And it shows that in giving *mukti* the Name gives the solid and impregnable groundwork upon which *mukti* rests, without which *mukti* is a glorified bondage, *viz.*, release from desire. Release from desire is release from the incubus of the mind. Release from *vāsanā*—that dark and deadly flowering of the mind—is the great goal of human existence.

It is the supreme merit of *Kali Yuga* that it helps to liberate this mighty potency in the Name. That which inheres in spirit is, as said before, above ebb and flow, wax and wane. The power which resides in the Name is in constant radiation, its absorption varies according to the variable receptivity of matter. In *Kali Yuga* organisms response to spiritual impacts attains an extraordinary development. For once spirit finds in matter a marvellously plastic and receptive instrument. The half-awake and restive nerve of *Dvāpara* becomes in *Kali* sur-

prisingly sensitive, and mirrors with wonderful effectiveness the streams of light which issue from the Name. The magic of *Kali* works this transformation.

The extraordinary productivity of *Kali Yuga* aids spiritual development in another most remarkable way. In the *Vishnu Purāṇam* (Part VI. Chap. 2), from which we have already quoted, occurs the following suggestive passage :—

“ Man, by the ocean of his own virtues, is cleansed from all sin.”

Spiritual development turns upon the exhaustion of *karma*. The exhaustion of *karma* in general is oftener than not an elaborate and complicated process. Sin, for example, in the ordinary man is worked out in part in the *preta* body (the body which is assumed immediately after death), and in part in the physical body in the subsequent incarnation. In the first place, this arrangement causes a more or less prolonged detention in the *preta* body. Secondly, the persistence of the evil into the next physical incarnation cuts across the orbit of spiritual development, and impairs its unity.

But this process of *kārmic* readjustment has another more serious drawback. *Prārabdha karma* is what has actually in any incarnation entered on its process of exhaustion. It is a ruthless creditor, and exacts its proverbial pound of flesh in sorrow and suffering. *Sanchita karma* is not yet ripe, or ready for the exhaustion of its momentum. It exists, arranged in supersensuous strata, as a permanent potentiality, in the infinite deeps of the mind, whence it rises to the surface and mingles in the current of *prārabdha* or exhaustive *karma*. It is *sanchita karma* which constitutes one of the principal sources of resistance to a too rapid evolution of the mind. Its opposition to advance is silent, continuous, obdurate, uncompromising. The mind rises with the flash of a meteor to untrodden depths of space, only to be brought by the gravitation of *sanchita karma* back to solid earth upon the exhaustion of its original momentum. Its principal manifestation is as a

constant and invincible inertia, but it occasionally explodes into *râjasic* outbursts which are confined within the limits of temptation.

Wherefore, both *prârabdha* or exhaustive and *sanchita* or unexhausted *karma* are barriers to spiritual progress. *Prârabdha karma* destroys its unity, and extends the process of exhaustion over into the *preta* life and the subsequent incarnation. *Sanchita karma* interposes a persistent and obdurate inertia. Let us now see in what a remarkable way *Kali Yuga* simplifies the working out of *karma* and aids spiritual development:—

“Man, by the ocean of his own virtue (is) cleansed from all sins.”

Note carefully the word *all* in the quotation. *Kali Yuga* is alike imperial in good and evil. Its evil sickens and alienates, its good electrifies the soul. Such is the magic which resides in *Kali Yuga* that in it the evolution of virtue gives complete manumission from sin. In the ordinary soul, sin works out in part in the *preta* body, and in part in the next physical body in continuous succession. In the virtuous soul it is scotched and becomes extinct. It is thus that *Kali Yuga* economises the duration and simplifies the process of *kârmic* readjustment.

For virtue grows, as we have seen elsewhere by appropriating to its own essence the malformed and dissonant energy of vice. Virtue is vice controlled, harmonised, transformed, redeemed. *Karma* which works out, as ordinarily it does, by assimilation of effect, survives in potency in the seed. *Karma* which works out, as virtue does, by transmuting and redeeming energy, becomes effete and extinct in the seed. Of the four *yugas* it is *Kali* alone in which virtue possesses the efficacy of extinguishing sin. The genius of *Kali* endows it with a potency which it does not possess in the more sluggish atmosphere of the other *yugas*.

The possibilities of *Kali Yuga* would thus seem to be

absolutely without a parallel in any other *yuga*. Its most remarkable feature is its intense creativeness. With the headlong fury of a tidal wave it sweeps over the land, and brings an awful fecundity to good and evil. But it is not merely in the *mass* of energy, miraculous as it is, that the boasted superiority of *Kali Yuga* lies. *Kali* is a redeemer. Its inscrutable power of redemption is seen in the fecundity it imparts to gross physical energies, whereby they rival the effectiveness of the highest *dhyānic* energy in *Satya Yuga*.

True, *Kali* is prolific alike in good and evil. To the child of *pravritti* it opens up a vista of weird and kaleidoscopic variety and charm; to the wicked it provides a carnival of iniquity. And thus it quickens to an extraordinary extent the hitherto dormant pace of evolution.

But to the soul that has mellowed into *nivritti* *Kali* is equally bounteous. To those who can resist the infection of evil and hold to the sheet-anchor of good, *Kali* brings the balm of hope and comfort. For good in *Kali* is abnormally, amazingly reproductive of good. With the reckless prodigality of a spendthrift *Kali* scatters life throughout the land, and if in the scrimmage which ensues for possession evil finds itself enriched, so also does good.

To the pure and the good and the virtuous, to those who are striving to reach a higher life, *Kali* is the torch-bearer of hope and joy. To them it unfolds a future rich with an illimitable promise. For such is the unutterable charity and benignity which breathes through the spirit of *Kali*, that in it the evolution of a single virtue means the extinction of a host of sins. And remember also that one day of effort in this *yuga* is equal to ten slow, laborious, tiresome years in *Satya*. What an instructive light does this revelation throw on the value of effort at this day on this soil. And what a stimulus of hope and courage does it bring to the aspirant to *bhakti*, for the humanity of *Satya* and other *yugas*, says the *Bhāga-*

*vatam* (Skandha IX. Chap 5.) fervently desire incarnation in *Kali Yuga*, in which *bhaktas* are born in this land. For *bhakti* is practically the only path of spiritual progress which survives the poisonous infection of *Kali* and grows by an absorption of its fertilising powers. *Kali* is the personification of *adharma*, unrighteousness, sin ; it organises the forces of evil into a solid and compact array, and starts a furious and sustained crusade against the forces of *dharma*. All that is good, holy, pure is soon reduced by its hell-hounds to a hideous and shapeless mass of ruins ; the paths of spiritual unfoldment, which retain their purity and individuality through the first three *yugas* are shaken by this tornado of evil and emasculated and disorganised by its infection. *Bhakti* at first shares their tragic fate ; but it soon revives, and grows strong by a wonderful conversion of the evil of *Kali* into nutrient elements.

The survival of *bhakti* amid universal decay is a fact of the deepest significance. It conclusively shows that *bhakti* is practically the only path of spiritual progress which is especially under divine protection. Alone among all the paths that lead to the Divine, it has resisted the seduction and disorganisation of *Kali*, and turned its perilous productivity into elements of nutrition and expansion. The genius of *bhakti* draws life from death, and turns enemies into allies. It has two most powerful allies, in this soil which has afforded it asylum, and in this *yuga* which has dealt perfidiously with the other paths of spiritual growth. In this land, the creative theatre of destiny, it is connected by the closest bonds of union with the Divine. The supreme creative *I's'vara* has by His own hands expanded, organised and perfected it, and moulded it into a *living* instrument of release. His life still animates it and flows through its veins. And along with the organisation and life, which it has obtained from the Divine, it has received from the soil, its birthplace and asylum, the equally wondrous

gift of its creative potency. *Bhakti* in *Bhāratavarsha* is not only *living*, but intensely, extraordinarily creative.

And *Kali Yuga* has brought to *bhakti* a characteristic gift. Awed and humbled by its glory and incorruptibility, *Kali* has offered to serve and exalt. All its intense, astonishing, overwhelming productivity it has laid at the feet of *bhakti*, which has absorbed it and transformed it into a glorious creative power. The accumulated creative impulse of the soil and of the cycle imparted to *bhakti* makes it irresistible. In this *land*, in this *yuga*, *bhakti* is a *living* and intensely *creative* path of release.

A PAURANIC STUDENT.

(*To be continued.*)

“The hour when a lofty conviction forsakes us should never be one of regrets. If a belief we have clung to goes, or a spring snaps within us; if we at last dethrone the idea that has so long held sway, this is proof of vitality, progress, of our marching steadily onwards, and making good use of all that lies to our hand. We should rejoice at the knowledge that the thought which so long has sustained us is proved incapable now of even sustaining itself. And though we have nothing to put in the place of the spring that lies broken, there need still be no cause for sadness. For better the place remain empty than that it be filled by a spring which the rust corrodes, or by a new truth in which we do not wholly believe.....And even though our belief forsake us entirely, it still will take with it nothing of what we have given, nor will there be lost one single sincere, religious, disinterested effort that we have put forth to ennoble this faith, to exalt or embellish it. Every thought we have added, each worthy sacrifice we have had the courage to make in its name, will have left its indelible mark on our moral existence. The body is gone, but the palace it built still stands, and the space it has conquered will remain for ever unenclosed.”  
(*Maeterlinck*).



## THE POWER OF THE IDEAL LIFE.

There is an ideal life for every man and every woman on earth ; and deep down in the heart of every man and woman there is the consciousness that such a life exists ; it may be very dim, perhaps hardly to be recognised for what it really is, but still it is there. Each human being has an ideal, even the lowest, the most uncultured, and the most sinful ; it may be a very low one, and we may be tempted to call it very unworthy, or even to deny its existence. But what is an ideal ? is it not something which we recognise as a little higher, a little better, a little more worth striving for, than anything we have yet realised or have even tried to realise ? There is no one, however poor and wretched, or however apparently engrossed in the pleasures of the senses, who has not in his heart of hearts some object, some point to which he looks forward as that to which he hopes some day to attain, that which is to him the highest happiness, the greatest good. Even the starving beggar thinks of the possibility of having always enough to satisfy his hunger, and the worn-out drudge looks forward to the time when she will be able to rest as long as she will. A low ideal, we may think, but perhaps the highest they are yet capable of. Our ideals rise with our growth ; the ideal of the child is not that of the grown man, and the ideal of the young soul, just waking to a sense of its self-existence, is far below that of one with ages of experience behind it ; but ever, as one ideal is realised or loses its attraction, another arises in the distance to take its place. Sad indeed would it be for all of us if this were not so, for the loss of the ideal means the loss of hope and strength.

This is the first point for us to recognise—the necessity

and the value of an ideal ; it is the distinguishing mark of the *man*, that he cannot be content with his present state, but is ever looking forward to something beyond. It is a universal experience of our strangely dual consciousness that the outer life, the life of action, does not truly express our real, our best self ; that we feel ourselves to be something better than the self which is seen by those around us. We know that there is something within us far higher and nobler than anything which finds expression in our ordinary life ; we are conscious of desires and aspirations which perhaps we can hardly formulate, but we feel that this life of aspiration is more truly ourselves than the life of action ; and it is this life of aspiration which is the ideal life. We might call it the life of thought as against the life of action, the life of spirit as opposed to that of matter—a life which is very far from realisation, which may indeed never be realised in this incarnation nor for many a one yet to come ; but which still shines in the distance, a beacon light to guide us on our way, filling us with hope and courage, the light of our divine self.

The next point for us to realise is that our ideals are not final ; but are ever changing, becoming higher and higher ; as we come a little nearer to our ideal of the present moment, we see that what has been our inspiration up to the point we have reached was only a partial expression of the truth it represented to us—a truth which gradually expands and reveals more and more of itself to our soul. Maeterlinck speaks of this gradual expansion of the ideal in his essay on *The Mystery of Justice* ; showing that what appears to us now to be just may one day be recognised as the greatest injustice. He says :—

What seems irreproachably just to us at the moment is probably the merest fraction of what would seem just could we shift our point of view. We need only compare what we were doing yesterday with what we do to-day ; and what we do to-day would appear full of faults against equity, were it granted to us to rise still higher and compare it with what we shall do to-morrow.

What is true of justice is true of every other ideal we set before us ; it is constantly rising, continually expanding ; and it is the very efforts we make to reach our ideal which are the cause of its growth and expansion.

Our ideals are stepping-stones, whereby we rise to higher conceptions of truth, glimpses of the Light, dim reflections of the Great Beyond ; but they represent all that we can as yet see, and are the truth itself to us at the point where we now stand. Man's life is a gradual ascent ; as in the climbing of a mountain we see a peak in front of us and think it is the summit, but, as we approach it, we find there is another beyond, and another, and yet another ; so is it with our ideal life. We see only a little way before us, but, as we go on, more and more comes into view ; every fresh point gained reveals others beyond, and, as one ideal is realised and becomes a part of our actual life, ever something higher is seen in the distance and becomes in its turn that towards which we strive—our highest ideal. But it is just the knowledge that this is so and ever will be so that carries us onward.

This is the main thought that we want to realise—the power of the ideal life as a force for good, as the strongest factor in the evolution of the soul. Its strength lies in the fact that this ideal life is our own highest self, which is in truth one with the Divine Self. It is that Divine Life that shines through and is reflected in our highest ideals ; and because we are in essence one with that Self, there is that within us that responds to its influence. When once we catch a glimpse of that glory, there is no longer anything in the lower life that can satisfy the longing of our souls ; and the sight of that highest ideal, when once we recognise it for what it is, has power to lift us from the lowest depths and to plant our feet firmly upon the upward path. So the *Gîtâ* says again and again that “they who know Me come to Me,” whatever their state may be.

“If an unrighteous person worship Me, worshipping not another,.....speedily he becometh dutiful and goeth to eternal peace.” (IX ; 30, 31.) And again “Even if thou beest among all evil men the most evil-doing, yet shalt thou escape from all sin by the raft of wisdom.” (IV, 36.)

Tennyson has realised this truth, and put it very beautifully in the last of the *Idylls*, where Arthur is bidding farewell to Guinevere. Then for the first time, in the midst of her misery and degradation, she sees him as he is, and, knowing herself also as never before, yet sees and grasps the hope he holds out to her that :—

“Hereafter in that world where all are pure  
We two may meet before high God, and thou  
Wilt spring to me and claim me thine.”

That was the one thought which gave her hope in her darkest hour, and strength to take the first step upward—the vision of that higher, that blessed life, the life of her own true self, to which sooner or later she must win.

“I think there was a hope.....his hope he called it.....  
That in mine own heart I can live down sin,  
And be his mate hereafter in the heavens  
Before high God..... Ah, my God,  
What might I not have made of Thy fair world,  
Had I but loved Thy highest creature here ?  
It was my duty to have loved the highest ;  
It surely was my profit had I known ;  
It would have been my pleasure had I seen ;  
We needs must love the highest when we see it,  
Not Lancelot, nor another ”

And that hope, the knowledge of what she might have been and might yet be, enabled her to strive afresh, leading her onward through repentance and humility

“To where beyond these voices there is peace”.

It is this truth, the power of the ideal, of the perception of our highest possibilities, which seems to me to be so strikingly portrayed in Jerome's wonderful little play, *The Passing of the Third Floor Back*. The plot, if such it can be called, is of the slightest, most meagre character, with very little inci-

dent and few striking situations ; but from beginning to end this one idea stands out prominently. 'The Stranger appears, apparently from nowhere, amongst the residents of a third-class boarding-house in Bloomsbury Square, and after a few months' residence in their midst, completely transforms the whole establishment—from the grasping, dishonest landlady to the little drab of a servant-girl—from a household of self-seeking, mutually suspicious, bickering, back-biting individuals, perpetually trying to over-reach one another, to a home where each one is striving to do all that is possible towards making the others a little happier. Then he disappears again, as mysteriously as he came, into the mists of the London Square, and is seen no more. How does he effect this change, which seems little short of a miracle ? Doubtless it is to a certain extent the result of his own pure and noble nature, in the presence of which evil seems unable to exist. But the great power which he exercises over them seems to spring from the fact that he believes in them. He comes amongst them, so utterly different from themselves, so out of harmony, as it would appear, with his surroundings, that his companions feel instinctively that he is not one of them ; and, as usual in such cases, they begin by disliking him, jeering at him under a thin veil of politeness, *very* thin at times, and apparently trying to make him as uncomfortable as possible. But the attempt is a signal failure. With his entrance a new spirit steals into the house, and each and all of them stand abashed before the look of his quiet, grave eyes, which somehow seem to put them out of countenance and to read them through and through ; and the rude jest, the cutting sarcasm, the bitter, uncharitable speech, the vain and silly coquetry, all die on the lips of the speaker. For he takes them all at their very best, gives them credit for all the good they might have done and did not, recalling to their minds without a word from himself the ideals, the hopes and desires of their youth, which had

long been forgotten ; appearing to them as an old friend who had passed out of their life, but whom they now remember as one who knew them well in their best days.

“ Yes,” says the Major’s wife, “ I remember your voice ; it was always the same. But it is you only I seem to remember—nothing about you—no time, no place. I suppose it will come back to me.” “ And if not,” rejoins the Stranger, “ we will not trouble. The meeting-place of friends is in the heart.” “ You always thought well of me, I remember that.” “ I know you so well.”

And into the cat-and-dog life of the Major and his wife there steal once again the little attentions and kindnesses of long ago. Before the mind of the wealthy book-maker, who would have married the girl who did not love him, but wanted his money, he conjures up the vision of self-sacrifice which would give her up—“ forgetting self—forgetting all things but the loving of her and the serving of her.” To the young musician and artist who are sacrificing their art to their desire for worldly success, he shows their better selves, still faithful to the gift that has been entrusted to them, and, under the influence of his supreme belief in them, their faith in themselves returns, and they can do no otherwise than respond to his appeal. Even the little servant-girl is conscious of a new and strange influence which with his coming has entered into their lives, making her feel that this life of “ a-lyin’ and a-cheatin’ and a-snarlin,’ despisin’ one another and ourselves,” is not the whole world, that there must be something better. Let me quote a part of the scene between them. The stranger has been asking who her people are, and she says :—

“ I dunno. My mother died in the ’orspital, so they ’ve always told me. Never ’eard anything about my father.”

The stranger lays his hand on her shoulder.

“ He was a friend of mine.”

“ My father ! A friend of—” Her voice dies away in wonder.

“ A dear friend.”

*Stasia.* “ Then—then was he a gentleman ?”

The stranger is silent a moment.

“ A great gentleman,”

*Stasia.* "Then am I—a lidy?"

*The stranger.* "His daughter, and so like him....."

*Stasia.* "You're making game of me.' Ow can I be any one? I was born in a workhouse."

The stranger is again silent a moment. "A King once was|born in a stable"

*Stasia.* "Yes, sort o' King like I'm a lidy—that nobody knows."

*The stranger.* "They learned it later."

She looks up and meets his eyes.

"You're talking sense : you mean a real King—with a crown?"

*The stranger.* "Yes ; He wore a crown, so you see, Stasia, the place doesn't matter. There must be poor kings the world for a time does not know." Stasia looks at him and her doubts fall away. "Yes, he must have been a gentleman if he was your friend. Would you mind—for his sake, like?"

Her hands creep out timidly towards him, but even as he stands waiting, she shrinks back.

'No, I beg your pardon ; I was forgetting. I'm a bad 'un."

The stranger. "Did I ask you?"

And as he still stands waiting, with open arms, she comes nearer and nearer, looking up at him, her childish eyes filled with love, while he puts his arm round her, kisses her, and gently puts her from him. And that is the beginning of a new life to her, a life in which everything which before was, as she says, "a muddle," of which she "couldn't make head or tail," becomes beautiful and full of meaning.

And so is it with them all ; they know not who he is, nor where he came from ; yet he seems the friend of all, and what they do know and feel is that they cannot live their former unworthy life in his presence. And the reason of it? As the dishonest broker says to him,

"You have always taken it for granted, in all our conversations, that I was a fine fellow, in sympathy with fine ideas. But that is not what surprises me ; it is to find that you are right."

That was the secret of the change he brought about ; to each one he showed his or her own better self, with perfect confidence that, once having seen it, they would never fail to follow the ideal thus set before them ; and his perfect faith in them gave the will and the strength to do it.

Only once is there any hint, and that a very slight one, that he is anything more than an ordinary man ; and that is on the night of his arrival, in his interview with Vivian, who is throwing over the man she loves in order to wed money. The stranger is sitting alone by the fire, when Vivian comes in, and kneels on the other side of the fire, looking into it. After a while she turns and looks at him.

“ Who are you ? Why do you follow me ? I see you in the streets, you look at me out of crowds. Why have you come here, what is it that you want with me ? ”

*The stranger.* “ To plead with you—will you listen ?—for one who loves you.”

*Vivian.* “ You are his friend. It is he who has brought you here—to plead for him. Poor boy ! (Then hardening again). Well, what have you to say ? What proposals do you bring from him ? What does my love offer me ? ”

*The stranger.* “ Poverty—struggle ; hopes—fears ; pain—joy ; love—life.”

(A silence). Then Vivian says with a bitter laugh,

“ So he has told you I am that— sort of woman ? Hadn't you better find out the truth about me before you waste your words ? Look at me with those eyes that seem to read one through and through. Is it not written plainly enough, the thing I am ? ”

The stranger looks into her eyes.

“ A woman fair and sweet, made for honour, for worship.”

*Vivian.* “ Ah, perhaps ! But what has she made of herself ? What else do you read ? ”

*The stranger.* “ It is not written.”

Vivian springs up with a mocking laugh.

“ But it soon will be. Shall I tell you the lover of my choice ? The man who can give me all my soul's desire—money and the things that money can buy. You think me a woman. I am only a luxury-loving animal. He will give me Shame to wed with me. But after a little while I shall get used to her. She will be clad in my clothes, and I shall think her Honour. Go back to him. Tell him my choice is made. I have had a better offer. I marry Shame.”

*The stranger.* “ You will not wed with Shame. You shall not.”

*Vivian.* “ Shall not ? Who will stay me ? ” The stranger rises. “ Your better self. There are those whose better self lies slain by their own hand, to trouble them no more. But yours, child, you have let grow too strong. It will ever be your master. You must obey. Flee from it, it will ever follow you. You cannot escape. Insult it, and it will chastise you with burning thoughts, with stinging self-proach, with repentance that comes too late. It is your master. You must obey. The sternness dies, and the gentleness returns). You will marry your lover. With him you will walk the way of sunlight and of shadow.”



*Vivian.* "Who are you? I know your voice. I hear it in the wind. I hear it in the silence of the night. Who——?"

There comes a strange awe into her eyes, and there is a movement as though she were about to kneel. "You are——." The stranger stretches out his hands and stays her, and there is a silence.

"A fellow-lodger. Good-night."

It matters little whom we take the stranger to represent; the principle is the same in any case, whether we think of him simply as a true, good man, or as our own Higher Self, or, as Vivian did, as the Christ come once more to earth.\* The secret of his power is still the same, the revelation of the Divine depths of human nature. And indeed, is not this the true meaning of the atonement of Christ when, as Evelyn Underhill says,

"That doctrine is understood, not as referring to one isolated historic act alone, but as a principle operative over the whole of life . . . and each spirit achieving union with God . . . is seen to become part of that eternal atonement, to be a channel whereby fulness of life is mediated to the race, the most powerful of the instruments by which the spirit works upon the souls of men."

Does not the power of Christ's redemption lie in this:—that He reveals to us in Himself the pure ideal life which is the heritage of every man, and which has within it the power to raise each one to its own level, in proportion as he responds to its influence?

One last thought. He who would live for his ideal, who would strive to reach the ideal life, must be prepared to

\* Rev. R. J. Campbell, referring to this play in one of his sermons, says:—"Most of the critics of that play have imagined that the mysterious stranger who revolutionised that Bloomsbury boarding-house was Jesus. In a sense he was; but Mr. Jerome told me I was right in averring that he was also the eternal God who indwells all men. How well we know his voice! It haunts us as it did the worldly-minded, sin-stained dwellers in the stage boarding-house. Nearer and dearer than any earthly voice it sounds; sweeter and holier than any earthly presence our invincible redeemer comes. And we shall hear that voice again when the bitterness of death is past—not another, but the very same, the accents of the divine friend and companion of our earthly pilgrimage. Not as a stranger will he stand revealed. We shall see him again, and our hearts shall rejoice, and our joy no man taketh from us."

sacrifice something for its sake ; only when we are willing to let go the lower, can we reach the higher. This is always the condition of progress ; as we leave our old, dead self behind us, a new and living one rises before us and draws us onward ; he who cannot make this sacrifice for the sake of the light he sees above him, must be content with the darkness of the lower life. Yet even for him one day that light will shine forth in all its fulness, and when once he sees and realises its reflection in his inmost soul, he will respond, and for him too there will be nothing to do but to rise up and follow gladly wherever it shall lead.

MARIAN JUDSON.

“ I fled Him down the night and down the days ;  
 I fled Him, down the arches of the years ;  
 I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways  
 Of my own mind ; and in the mist of tears  
 I hid from Him, and under running laughter.  
 Up vistaed hopes I sped ; And shot, precipitated  
 Adown Titanic glooms of chasmèd fears,  
 From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.  
 But with unhurrying chase, And unperturbèd pace,  
 Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,  
 They beat—and a voice beat more instant than the Feet—  
 ‘ All things betray thee, who betrayest me.’

\* \* \* \* \*

Halts by me that footfall ; Is my gloom, after all,  
 Shade of His hand outstretched caressingly ?  
 ‘ Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest, I am He whom thou seekest !  
 Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest Me.’ ”

(From Thompson's *Hound of Heaven*).

## MYSTIC NUMBERS AND OCCULT CHRONOLOGY.

The above heading has been chosen for this paper, because it is herein proposed to deal with some matters which lie very much outside the track of most present-day students of hidden things. For however much the various fields of our modern mystical thought have been explored, and numerous as are the works thereon which have appeared, or the papers which have been written, but little, if anything, of any real value in this connection has come to light since the earliest works were written. In fact the whole matter seems to have met with but very little investigation or study ; and yet it is of such a nature that it would appear to be almost the first which invites a certain class of thinkers ; so that we might reasonably expect to find it had long since received as large a measure of attention as the available *data* might permit. With this in view, the author of the present attempt some years ago published a paper on the *Great Year of the Ancients*<sup>1</sup>, dealing with some of these numbers, in the hope of eliciting some further matter of such a nature from those who might be able to deal with these subjects, but nothing whatever eventuated therefrom ; and, in short, beyond a very meagre number of superficial notes, of no particular depth, nearly profitless, and a little study soon abandoned, nothing of this nature has been forthcoming in our mystic literature and the press generally.

Yet there can be little doubt this is a department of our studies which ought to be of great importance to a just understanding of esoteric cosmogony and anthropology ; and in the absence of which there are more than enough examples of confusion and misunderstanding. In fact without it we may

<sup>1</sup> See *Theosophist*, Vol. XXII, No. 4 p. 211 *et seq.*

reasonably expect as much difficulty in understanding such things, as we should meet with if we endeavoured properly to comprehend English history without dates, with a number of reigns missing, and with no proper sequence among those which were given.

That nothing of a tangible nature in the above direction has resulted from any efforts which have so far come to light, would seem to argue that there has been something wrong in our attitude towards the subject—that in fact our study has been neither deep nor thorough ; and it accordingly behoves us to consider this position. When we read in various books about these things as they are casually mentioned in them, and a few odd numbers (such, for instance, as the approximate cycle of rebirth) are incidentally thrown in, how utterly unsatisfactory it must be to the thoughtful reader, to think that he or she has not been put in possession of the complete system to which they belong ! Who, it may reasonably be asked, is there among the really earnest students of mysticism, who would not give at least something to know the whole—or to be able, by simple arithmetical processes, to fill up the gaps and show what the remaining parts must be ? To judge by results, the answer is—almost none at all. It is therefore obvious *whose* fault it is if students do not know these things—it is simply their own !

If we will not, by even a moderate amount of meditation and thought-effort, endeavour to bring ourselves into relation with that plane of consciousness where, among the *ākāś'ic* records, these things are all to be found—as we are told they have all long since been worked out<sup>2</sup>—then we cannot expect to be put in possession of them ; since without such efforts there could be no understanding on our part, even though the higher intelligences were ever so willing to instruct

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* April 1881, p. 179, editor's note.

us. We have been plainly told what to do if we desire to know<sup>3</sup>; but we are also well aware that the solution of such problems requires at the least a certain amount of deep pondering and reflection; for only in such measure as we may apply these primary means, will the Great Ones be able to instil their knowledge into our minds. If we diligently employ these means, they will be able to convey to us the fundamental ideas<sup>4</sup> which will provide the materials upon which we can work—and then, if we are untiring in our efforts to check and elaborate these by patient experimental labour, the necessary deficiencies of our perceptive faculties will be improved thereby, and our intuitive powers will be cleared and developed by contact with such abstract planes of thought and continuous effort,<sup>5</sup> and in the end we *must* reach a clear and definite result.

The means of attainment being thus pointed out to us,<sup>6</sup> we may trace the same methods as having been in use at all times when occultism has impressed itself; for meditation is the key to the unlocking of the inner consciousness. But even without having to resort to those higher and more abstract branches of it which are best calculated to open our true mystic faculties to the higher planes of being, it must be sufficiently evident that there may be a more ordinary kind which is well adapted to do most, if not all, that the matter of this paper requires. For, if we bring to bear upon such study a fairly intense and concentrated mental effort, this will bring

<sup>3</sup> "Try to solve the problem of the 777 incarnations"—*S.D.*

<sup>4</sup> *Esoteric Buddhism*, original preface to 1st ed., in 7th ed. p. XIX.

<sup>5</sup> "For he who seeks to discover, must first reduce himself into a kind of abstract idealism, and be rendered up . . . to the faculties which contemplate and imagine." Cf. *Zanoni*, Bk. IV, Chap. II. p. 215 of Knebworth ed. and also Ch. IV. See likewise *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 486.

<sup>6</sup> It is not for nothing that the *S.D.* (I, 468 n.e.) speaks of "Real knowledge, obtained through meditation"; since this is a palmary means of obtaining access to the Everlasting Record, or that psychometric repository of all that has ever taken place, wherein ancient wisdom is to be found.

us into *rapport* with many thought-records which have to do with the subject we are investigating. And indeed it is by this very method that all inventors, researchers, and those who have given out "new" and seemingly original discoveries and ideas, have in time past been led to them ; and it may not unreasonably be inferred that the greatness and perfection of those things is an index to the amount of concentration employed in their unveiling, and the measure of the faculties thus evolved, no matter whether in one or in many lives.<sup>7</sup>

But possibly there is another source whence, by aid of the above means, we may evolve the required knowledge. The idea that the actualities of the cosmos are resolvable by some theory of numbers has always been a favourite one with mystical students ; who associated ideas, numbers, personalities, and universal emanation together.<sup>8</sup> This numerical theory has an attraction for the mind which doubtless proceeds from a latent consciousness implanted in each human centre of thought, connecting it with the cosmic memory ; where all the successive steps of creation through the æons of time are registered. Thus, wherever man has thought, there have arisen numbers<sup>9</sup>, which will attach themselves to the cosmic order which the thought evolves ; and these numbers will express always the same thing under the same circumstances.

One of the unwearied students of the present-day movement in the direction of mystic thought, who has stood by its modern manifestation from nearly its earliest times, and who claims to have engaged in laborious researches calculated to demonstrate its fundamentals to the world of science, suggests a feasible hypothesis in regard to these matters. According to his view, the higher intelligences have impressed many

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Theosophist*, Vol. XXI, No. 8, pp. 462, 464 ; *paras* in an article by the present writer.

<sup>8</sup> *S.D.*, III, 8, 69, 98-103, 232, 265, 436, 523. There are similar passages in Vols. I and II. *s.v.* Numbers and Numerals.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *Zanoni*, Bk. IV, ch. IV, p. 230.

things upon the inner faculties of mystic students while their consciousness functions upon higher planes, when the physical body is wrapped in slumber, and the brain appears not to record any impress. And he is therefore of opinion that if the brain-consciousness could be awakened to the perceptions of its higher aspect when it has been acting upon these planes, all these problems would become clear in proportion to the degree of such awakening<sup>10</sup>. Such is doubtless the source of much that we learn from occult teachers ; but if sufficient advantage had been taken of it by those who may be specially fitted for the kind of research here to be considered, they might long since have been able to bring it to a comparatively speedy and practical issue ; but as yet there seems little sign of their efforts, or of any results therefrom.

It is to be remarked that those who are supposed to have come into more immediate contact with the teachings of the higher cosmic intelligences through their representatives or mediums upon this plane, have often brought thence some knowledge of numbers in relation to cosmogony and anthropology more or less definite ; and have not unfrequently made such knowledge a matter of instruction (under whatever bonds of secrecy) to all who would by labour and devotion seek to participate therein. Therefore if, when we find these teachings are again brought forward in an obscure manner by the great teachers under the guise of modern mystic revelations, we find definite numbers in some measure indicated by them, may we not accept these as an invitation to seize upon such available points as being best suited to the present state of our minds—as offering, in short, objective tests, which, if we earnestly take them up and work out their relations, will eventually provide us with at least one of the

<sup>10</sup> An old companion of H.P.B., whose name I have no permission to quote : in a private letter to myself

keys which will at last unlock the temple of this otherwise occult knowledge for us.

For it is scarcely probable that these scattered *data* would be put within our reach unless it were possible to fill in the *lacunæ*, provided we duly qualify ourselves for the task; nor is it likely that the numbers cited are of so incomplete or unreliable a nature as to make it impossible to correlate them, and thus evolve the system or systems to which they belong. It is much more probable that, as in the case of the axioms and postulates of Geometry, they contain the potentiality of all that follows, and will ultimately enable us to build up all the subsequent and consequent problems and their solutions. It is a matter of history that scattered fragments of Geometry were extant long before the time when they were systematised by Euclid; and it is not unlikely, in view of the fact that Geometry was so often interpreted in an occult sense<sup>11</sup>, that at least some of the mystic schools put more or less of these before their students as tests to prove their genius and laboriousness. If such pupils then took up with ardour the problems thus submitted to them, and worked out the inevitable conclusions, they must have reached a position in the world of thought which perhaps was hundreds of years in advance of their times. And had the men who composed the ancient world of speculative philosophy taken up these scattered bits of knowledge, as we have at present the opportunity of doing in regard to the numbers offered to us and the system to which they may belong, they might have been saved from many perplexities; and it would not have remained for Euclid alone to be able to demonstrate that absolute truth (in at least one direction) was within the reach of the human mind, while his contemporaries thought it to be an unattainable quantity.<sup>12</sup>

So may it be with our special kind of researchers; who,

<sup>11</sup> See *S.D.*, 1, 168, note on value of radius to circumference, &c.; also III, 69.

<sup>12</sup> Draper, *Conflict of Religion and Science*, 14th ed., pp. 27, 28, 33.



if they will take up the science of numbers in relation to cosmic cycles, will ultimately find in what way man stands related to the universe; and the facts of the world's history will become so many checks upon these computations, just as the observed positions of the heavens are upon the calculations of the astronomer. And much in the same way that Euclid was able to overthrow the false conclusions of his time by the severest demonstration, so ought we to be able to do in regard to the incorrect deductions of a groping science, the uncertainties of which are shown by the vast discrepancies in such things as the geological periods, so differently given by various scientists. But this position we shall by no means attain without a degree of labour commensurate to the magnitude of the acquisition sought, and the power to be gained.

Yet, supposing the numbers which are involved in our mystic cosmogony, *etc.*, are understandable by the means indicated in the foregoing, the apparent absence of results scarcely justifies us in supposing they have been absolutely neglected, even among our modern students who give so little sign of them ; nevertheless we are faced with the fact that if they have ever been unravelled, the solutions have apparently not been published abroad except in the most confused and fragmentary manner. And hence, taking into consideration the many injunctions and stipulations as to secrecy in such matters, it may possibly be a valid inference that some kind of bond or restriction is brought to bear upon investigators which prevents the results of their efforts reaching the public—as we are told is virtually the case in other instances where discovery is not permitted beyond a certain point.<sup>13</sup>

However, that may be, it certainly should not be allowed to discourage efforts ; nor is there any proof that so arrogant a claim to limit enquiry is a fact. It is far more likely that no truth can be denied to strenuous labour and unbroken attempts

<sup>13</sup> *Esoteric Buddhism*, p. 15, 7th ed.

to gain that truth. Nor should any student permit himself to be daunted by any refusal or denial, when the chances are that success can be commanded, and that it cannot be withheld at the option of some unreachable entities. At all events it is plain that any results which it may be right to publish, will meet with no restraint ; while if there are any which are not yet to be given to an unready world, they will somehow fail to appear—the proof of it lying in the experiment. If, therefore, the student discovers any of the forbidden numbers, and endeavours to publish them, such efforts will prove of no avail ; for no matter through what seeming accident, those things will either not see the light of publicity, or will meet with no recognition. So that in any case it is our simple duty to make whatever discoveries we can ; and if the results seem incommunicable or not acceptable, merely retain them until they shall perhaps be so. Students who may attain to such a position should, however, remember the parable of the pearls and the swine.

About these difficulties there appears to be one very simple and obvious rule ; for if the discoveries are our own, we can doubtless do with them as we please ; while if they are imparted to us as arcane or secret, we of course have no option in the matter. And it is unlikely that any pure effort will be allowed to drop into oblivion ; for if the intention is good, in such matters as these, no evil will be charged to our account as the consequence of such steps as we may think fit to take. Moreover, it is doubtless a fact that the free ventilation of such matters, and the upholding of simple truth in regard to them, can in the end do no sort of harm, no matter what may seem to be the case for the moment. For Truth never did any injury to her friends, any more than error could long succeed in stifling her voice.

We may next take a glance at the attitude or position assumed by our mystical authorities and writers, through the

principal of whom most of these things have reached us. Let us suppose (notwithstanding what has above been said), that at long intervals and on rare occasions, perhaps, some adventurous student of modern Mysticism attempts to educe some sort of order out of the chaotic figures here and there to be found in the literature such students affect; but after some desultory effort, having no proper keys whereby to unravel the tangle, is baffled accordingly. If upon this he makes application to any of the authors of well-known mystical books, who may be presumed to be in the best position for obtaining the requisite knowledge, the answer is very discouraging; it generally consists of a recommendation to drop the subject (if any reply at all is forthcoming), coupled perhaps with the information that all the exoteric numbers are hopelessly wrong, and are misleading in the extreme—as those best qualified to decide are understood to have informed Mr. Sinnett.<sup>14</sup>

And those who best knew H. P. B. tell us that it was useless to question her about these matters, as she alleged she had simply no head for figures, and always excused herself when she was asked to give any explanation concerning those connected with this subject.<sup>15</sup> Moreover she clearly tells us that she may have “bungled” the messages she received from the sources of her information, or which others received through her,<sup>16</sup> and in other ways gives us very clearly to understand we must form our own conclusions<sup>17</sup>; as she has imparted to us all the information she is able to give.<sup>18</sup> If proof were wanted of her absolute lack of any definite knowledge in such matters, it may be found in her oft-repeated citation of the exoteric Kaliyuga epoch 3102 B.C., as if it were the actual chronological date of a particular event; whereas it can be clearly

<sup>14</sup> See *Vahan*, Vol. IX, No. 2. p. 7.

<sup>15</sup> In the private letter above referred to

<sup>16</sup> *S. D.*, I, 187, 299, n.c.

<sup>17</sup> “The student, is invited to use his own intuition,” *S D*, I, 299.

<sup>18</sup> *S.D.* I. 325. 338, n c.

shown to be merely an invention of comparatively recent times.<sup>18a</sup>

Those who at present put forward the largest claims to definite knowledge and means of research, always quote the date which is supposed to have been that of the sinking of Poseidonis, 9563-4 B.C., as if it were a thoroughly ascertained epoch ; at the same time one of them tells us she has no faculty for determining ancient dates.<sup>19</sup> Another professes to be able to recover lost points of time in antiquity, or at least to describe how it is done<sup>20</sup> ; but as he speaks of having measured long intervals by means of the period used in Drayson's erroneous theory of the *Second Rotation of the Earth*,<sup>21</sup> which, owing to an arithmetical blunder on the part of its author, carries its refutation on its face, no particular value can attach to such pseudo-chronological determinations, otherwise than as curious instances of delusion. And the date 9563-4 B.C., instead of being the true date of a great event in the world's history, is only a fictitious epoch derived from the Tables contained in Ptolemy's *Almagest*, circa 140 A. J. C., coupled with the astrological aphorisms of Berosus.<sup>22</sup> That there is no real power to decide upon actual ancient epochs, or any clear knowledge of them, may be seen by one of these authorities when she charges H. P. B., with a contradiction about the time of the beginning of the Fifth Root Race<sup>23</sup> ; but which, as investigation proves, is not in that instance any contradiction or mis-statement, whatever may be the case in other such matters.

<sup>18a</sup> This is clearly shown in the *Journal of the Br. Astron. Assoc.* Vol XIII, 2, p. 76, and XVII, 4, p. 179.

<sup>19</sup> *Pedigree of Man*, note to pp. 118, 119, 1st. ed.

<sup>20</sup> C.W.L., in *Clairvoyance*, p. 109 o.c.

<sup>21</sup> In the above private letter, referred to in notes 10 & 15.

<sup>22</sup> Elaborate proof of this is given in a pamphlet (still unpublished) on the *Errors of Ancient Chronology* by the present writer.

<sup>23</sup> *Pedigree of Man*, *loc. cit.* ; cf. *S.D.*, II, 9, 755.

The authorities and leaders implicitly relied upon by so many students being thus unhappily misled or unable to assist, it may very reasonably be asked what basis for the evolution of any scheme of mystic numbers and hitherto esoteric chronology, apart from mere imaginings, there can possibly be? The reply is that H. P. B., at least, often wrote better than she seems to have known; for, as she appears to have run through all the changes from spirit-medium up to semi-adept, she became the vehicle for a vast quantity of matter of the most miscellaneous kind; from which can be evolved items of knowledge (and pseudo-knowledge) which she, personally, did not consciously possess or lay claim to; but which are vastly interesting in themselves.

The literary sources of information, though scattered, are fairly numerous; but in most cases of a peculiar description. Thus we may gather from the general character of these writings that, few and rare as the complete works are said to be, they still exist; and an instance is quoted under the name of the *Chaldean Book of Numbers*—very often referred to by H.P.B.<sup>24</sup>, but concerning which she tells us scarcely anything, except that it is no longer in evidence; that it is referred to by several noted alchemists, and is now in the secret possession of some Persian Sufis. Concerning her own knowledge of it she tells us that she “possesses only a few extracts, some dozen pages in all, *verbatim* quotations from that priceless work, of which but two or three copies, perhaps,” are still in existence.<sup>25</sup> She elsewhere intimates that one of these was in the possession of a Jewish Rabbi, who emigrated from Jaffa for parts unknown, about forty years ago.

The best-known works are the *Zohar* and the *Sephir Jetzirah*; but they are so enigmatically written that very special

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *S.D.*, I, 26, 218, 234, 245, 260, 261, 352; and II, 40, 89, 104, 117, 395, 483, 533, 622. Also *I.U.*, I, 32, 33.

<sup>25</sup> *S.D.*, III, 99, 170, 184.

methods of interpretation must be resorted to, if consistent matter is to be extracted from them. The same may be said of the books of *Daniel*, *Ezekiel*, and the *Apocalypse* ; for all these works are non-understandable without proper keys.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless it is practicable to gather valuable information from them, as may be seen from instances already given,<sup>27</sup> and possibly students can supply other instances. But how little these works are understood by the average student, may be seen when he periodically informs us of the immediate advent of the Millenium—and as often has to postpone it for some few years.<sup>28</sup>

In India, where nothing receives much attention unless a vast antiquity is claimed for it (just as old people are most interested in the events and things of their youth), the origin of the exoteric cycles and numbers which have so long puzzled our Orientalists, is attributed to the lost or hidden works of two Atlantean astronomers.<sup>29</sup> But these *data*, if really archaic, have to a great extent been modernised ; and are said not to have appeared in India until the sixth century A. J. C.<sup>30</sup> With the Greeks who studied in Ancient Egypt it was the custom to attribute all such matter to Hermes Trismegistus.

Much has been said and written concerning the celebrated Pythagorean numerals ; but these, as far as we at present know them, do not appear to have much to do with chronology, but rather to be a symbolic method of conveying certain mystic teachings ; or the fundamental principles which Pythagoras is understood to have learned in the East. So far as we have any examples of them—or perhaps of the later inventions which

<sup>26</sup> Origen, Clemens Alexandrinus, and the Rabbis, have admitted that the *Kabbalah*, and the *Bible* are veiled and secret books, as see *S.D.*, III, 565.

<sup>27</sup> See the writer's article on the *Great Year*, already referred to in note I.

<sup>28</sup> Whoever will take the trouble to analyse the dates of the various "Millenium" scares in Europe from the year 1000 onwards, will find the cycles of its return have a common measure of about 5 years. Cf. *S.D.*, III, 350.

<sup>29</sup> *S.D.*, II, 7, 51, 73-4, 86, etc.

<sup>30</sup> *Natural Philosophy*, Vol. III, art. "Hist. of Astronomy," p. 117.

pass for them—the modern use of the numbers attributed to this great Greek teacher is practically confined to the shallow arts of the fortune-teller, and has little value.<sup>30a</sup>

Perhaps the first easily accessible work which gave anything like a consistent cosmic theory, and contained a few approximate numbers in connection with it, was Mr. Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism*. In it were presented the outlines of the Planetary Chain, the Seven Rounds and the Seven Races, and other at that time new *data*, which from the first led to a certain amount of curiosity as to the numbers which might be attached to them; but so great was the confusion and lack of coherence in the many statements which began to come into publicity, that nothing seems to have eventuated from any efforts which may have been made to correlate them.

There remain H.P.B.'s works, *Isis Unveiled* and the *Secret Doctrine*; and although from part of what has been said in the foregoing, little might be expected from these books at the outset, yet it is chiefly from the matter gathered together in them, that we are enabled to elaborate a system of chronology which not only entirely meets the case as far as any consistent system can do so, but also unveils for us other attempts which had formerly been made in the same direction, but had not reached a true solution. And what makes greatly in favour of the *bonafides* of H.P.B. as the messenger or medium of those who in the long past had apparently studied these matters, is that the results reached were evidently quite unknown to her.

Books on Occultism are like patchwork quilts—if we would know their real meaning, we must pick them to pieces, deal as we may see fit with the material which holds the patchwork together, and then reconnect all the separate pieces of similar fabric, before we can determine what was the original design belonging to those pieces; and what relation, if any, they held to each other. Filled with blinds and misleading matter as

<sup>30a</sup> Cf. *S.D.*, I, 489.

the works which deal with Occultism always are,<sup>30b</sup> no clear and consistent system will be found to agree with them in every particular ; but on the other hand such a system will enable us to avoid these pitfalls. The results may rather be denominated a system built upon the material derived from these books, than an exact statement and synthesis of their chronological contents ; since it cannot in every case agree with them, for very simple reasons. Fortunately, however, the true scheme is of such a nature that if investigators work in accordance with certain more or less obvious rules, they can scarcely help ultimately arriving at very nearly the same results in every part of it ; any outstanding differences being only due to inadequate enquiry or examination.

But the advantages of possessing the completed scheme, whether its *data* be considered exact or only approximate, are amply sufficient to repay any labour in its preparation or derivation. By its aid we can clear away many of the ambiguities of the *Secret Doctrine* and other such works ; and thus avoid most, if not all, of those errors which have led to so much of the confusion in studies founded upon them.

The chronological department of their mystical enquiries was evidently one which bulked very largely in the minds of the philosophical ancients ; and indeed it appears to have been considered by them as of crucial importance to the understanding of their cosmogonic and anthropological schemes, such as figure so largely in certain mystic writings of the present day. It appears to be spoken of all over the East now, as it was in the past, as a mysterious branch of knowledge possessed only by a few ; and the general ignorance on the subject seems to be much more in consequence of the secrecy which has enwrapped it than to any real lack of information, or inherent difficulty in the study ; as the following quotations may indicate.

<sup>30b</sup> See *Numbers, their Magic and Mystery*, by Dr. Isidore Kosminsky : and similar works.



"The possessors of occult knowledge are especially reluctant to give out numerical facts relating to cosmogony . . . . The Egyptian priests of Sais would not reveal even to the Greek legislator their secret chronology."<sup>31</sup>

"When we get to figures of this kind we are on very delicate ground, for precise periods are very profound secrets . . . ." <sup>32</sup>

"No figures and numbers can be given out to the public, for figures and numbers are the key to the esoteric system."<sup>33</sup>

"The teachings were imparted under protest . . . . They were, so to say smuggled goods."<sup>34</sup>

" . . . . it is well known that no secret was so well preserved and so sacred with the ancients as that of their cycles and computations. From the Egyptians down to the Jews it was held as the highest sin to divulge anything pertaining to the correct measure of time."<sup>35</sup>

"The Babylonians, who had all these cycles and taught them only at their great initiatory mysteries . . . . got their learning from India. [And]

"In their secret computations, the Japanese have the same figures in their cycles."<sup>36</sup>

" . . . . the precise number of years" [of the cycles] remained..... "an inviolable mystery within the precincts of the sanctuaries," and "was disclosed only to the initiates."<sup>37</sup>

All the above may have been quite true, both in spirit and letter ; and in fact is proved to have been so in a general sense, by the discovery of a chronological system or systems long lost or hidden ; but it must never be forgotten that an affectation of profound secrecy is at present, as it was among the ancients, no doubt quite as often a cover and retreat for ignorance and imposture, as for knowledge. And again there can be little doubt that matters were often kept in reverential secrecy by certain devotees, long after they had become obsolete errors from the standpoint of actual discovery by scientific investigators ; and not infrequently the most erroneous calculations might be preserved thus, as probably is the case

<sup>31</sup> *Esoteric Buddhism*, 7th ed., pp. 73, 115.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, note to p. 148.

<sup>33</sup> *S.D.*, I, 188.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, p. 212.

<sup>35</sup> *Cf. S.D.*, II, 414 n.e.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, II, 597.

<sup>37</sup> *Isis Unveiled*, I, 293, 294.

in India to-day. In fact we shall find that some of the revelations which have come to us through H. P. B., and have evidently been lost for some eighteen centuries past, are of this character ; nor is it safe to accept any of these results without question or unless buttressed by all possible proofs of verity, or offering the most reasonable grounds for acceptance.

In the endeavour to unravel these lost or hidden systems, it may be as well to ascertain as far as possible the conditions which limit the problem we may be attempting to solve. Thus, if the numbers quoted are not mere deceptions, they must (*a*) belong to a given system ; (*b*) be parts of different systems ; (*c*) be erratic discoveries or inventions either true or false, according to the scientific knowledge of their discoverers or originators ; or (*d*) have been disguised under various concealments.<sup>38</sup> The most cursory examination is sufficient to show that the numbers quoted are honest, and not mere intentional mystifications with no reality behind them ; as they are nearly all made up from well-known quantities concerned either with ancient or modern astronomy or chronological usage. The discovery that (*a*) they belong for the most part to one given system, may be the last to be proved ; because that particular system, being the most comprehensive and perfect, is not only the least simple and probably the most ancient, but has been the most jealously conserved. Its perfection may be just as we find to be the case with the civilisation and the arts of Egypt ; which are the more perfect, the further we can trace them into antiquity. Postulate (*b*) can be shown to be partly true, inasmuch as more than one system comes to light upon enquiry ; but sometimes part of the numbers involved are common to two or more of the ancient theoretical systems, which could only have been designed to harmonise such numbers and statements as their originators possessed. And (*c*) disposes of certain *data* which are incongruous, such as the exoteric

<sup>38</sup> See the writer's article referred to in note I, especially p. 216.

Kaliyuga epoch and that of the supposed sinking of Poseidonis, which were imaginary discoveries altogether dependent upon an erroneous astronomy and the absence of definite information on the part of their recorders.

But if, under all this, there can be shown to have lain a system which not only accommodates by far the greater number of the quantities and statements which are scattered through the books of the East and come to light from other sources, but also not unreasonably fits with the deductions of scientists as to the geological periods most nearly determined, also correlating the vibrations of colour and sound<sup>39</sup> with other things of a like nature, then perhaps the heterogeneous mass of matter gathered together by H.P.B., or through her agency, may receive a new force and corroboration over and above what has hitherto been forthcoming<sup>40</sup>; such as any calculator can more or less apply, once it has been discovered, without the evolution of any special faculties.

Students of history well know that the human heart is an unchanging thing, and that what was true of the augur of ancient Rome and his credulous following, is equally true for all time; therefore words of warning may here be addressed to those who may place too much importance upon individual statements, when compared with general conclusions of an undeniable character. In every age there have been people to be found who relied upon a single author in all such studies as those under review in this paper; who could not accept conclusions upon their merits, but would throw them aside with contempt unless received from certain sources upon which they had been in the habit of relying, and in which they had placed religious faith, or unless those conclusions had the *imprimatur* of such in some manner. Those good people, having no independence of thought, never made any

<sup>39</sup> See *Transactions of the Auckland Theosophical Society*, No. 1, p. 18.

<sup>40</sup> The best hitherto being *Scientific Corroborations of Theosophy*, by Dr. A. Marques

discoveries which might at all contradict their favourite authorities ; and when anyone else did so, with no matter what force of demonstration or of probability, the result was either denied, repudiated, or ignored. Such devotees were not only responsible for their own errors in this matter, and for the passing of them on to the present time for the confusion of truth-seekers, but they also enabled another class to profit by their egregious folly—that class who, like the Roman augur, made the greatest pretensions to power and knowledge, though they had no power but such as the credulity of their followers conferred upon them, and no knowledge but such as enabled them to exercise such influence for their personal ends. Doubtless these pretenders always minimised or denied what more earnest people might discover—because it was to their interest to keep back any knowledge which might throw an unwelcome light upon their own proceedings ; sooner than allow which, they would be prepared to deny the most palpable facts, postulate discoveries on their own part which were baseless, and suppress or destroy the words of all outside their own little circle. To this cause, perhaps quite as much as to simple error, we owe much of the nonsense which has come down to us. Let no one be deceived by it ; for it will only prove a stumbling-block in the way of enquiry. But we may learn from it that it is always best to treat with suspicion all statements which are prefaced by an assumption of authority dependent upon the admission of abnormal means of information upon the part of those who make them ; for all such things are very easily assumed, while they by no means can be so easily shown to exist. Consequently any matter asserted to be derived from such sources should be severely scrutinised before it is admitted to be true. On the other hand an undue scepticism is as detrimental to the discovery of truth as an indiscriminate credulity ; and it must be the care of every investigator to avoid alike the Scylla of obstinate disbelief, and the Charyb-

dis of unreflecting acceptance—in a word, prejudice ; for this is one of the greatest enemies to the discovery of Truth.

As one who has given the efforts of many years to the attempt to assign numbers which shall express the evolution of the human race according to the septenary scheme described by H.P.B., and to reduce it all to intelligible figures, the present writer can assure his readers that not only does such a system exist, but that it can be exactly described and its elements exactly determined. Yet by the result it is perfectly evident that no such knowledge was in the possession of H.P.B. Her great mediumistic (?) powers simply enabled those entities and denizens of other planes of consciousness who now represent the antique philosophers and Initiates—and unfortunately, the pretenders also—to indicate through her the large outlines of their schemes, some of the details, and some of the former attempts at solutions of them ; but it was unavoidably left to us to resolve these details and complete the particulars, by aid of the means already adverted to.

S. STUART.

“ Any influence is religious which fills the mind with gratitude and peace, which makes a man humble and patient and wise, which teaches him that the only happiness possible is to attune and harmonise his mind with the gracious purpose of God.

And so religion and worship grow to have a larger and wider significance ; for, though the solemnities of religion are one of the doors through which the soul can approach God, yet what is known as religious worship is only, as it were, a postern by the side of the great portals of beauty and nobility and truth. One whose heart is filled with a yearning mystery at the sight of the starry heavens, who can adore the splendour of noble actions, courageous deeds, patient affections, who can see and love the beauty so abundantly shed abroad in the world, who can be thrilled with ecstasy and joy by art and music, he can at all these moments draw near to God, and open his soul to the influx of the Divine Spirit.” (*A. C. Benson*).

## CONCEPTS OF THEOSOPHY.

### III.—THE PSYCHOLOGY OF NEGATION.

(Continued from p. 123.)

$$\frac{\left(\frac{s}{a}\right)^n + \left(\frac{t}{v}\right)^m + \left(\frac{f}{i}\right)^o + \left(\frac{r}{w}\right)^q + \left(\frac{u}{p}\right)^l}{\frac{S + T + F + R + U}{P}} = 1.$$

where  $s$  represents the sound-value of consciousness,  $a$  the *ākāśa* state,  $t$  the touch-value,  $v$  *Vāyu*,  $f$  form or *rūpa*,  $i$  fire,  $r$  *rasa* or taste and flavour of consciousness,  $w$  water,  $u$  uniqueness,  $p$  *prithvi*, and  $n, m, o, q$  and  $l$  represent the indices, the exponents of *s'akti*.  $S, T, F, R$  and  $U$  are the universal conscious-values or cosmic *tattva* values of Sound, Touch, Form, *Rasa* and Uniqueness, and  $P$  is the cosmic Power or *Prakriti*.

We will now revert to the above series, which was given in the previous article, for the further elucidation of the Psychology of Negation. The series, clumsy and imperfect as it is, will nevertheless represent to us the contents of consciousness in an individual or a cosmos. The term  $u/p$  is the normal psychic state in the physical plane;  $r/w$  that in the desire plane, and so on. Each represents a fraction, an *ansa*. The *numerator* is aptly so called because out of the common substratum of the *prithvi-tattva* it emerges and tends to indicate an element of uniqueness or name; and the *denominator* is aptly so called as it denominates the universal substratum which forms the base, as it were, of the element of uniqueness. These two are called respectively *Vāchya* and *Vācheka*, the indicated and the indicator, in the *Bhāgavatam* (II, x, 36). The two are not distinct and separate entities, but go to form one organic whole, for nothing can disturb the unity of the

Divine Life, even in manifestation. Each term is a whole, with, as it were, the denominator or *rûpa* as the base, and the numerator as the apex of a cone—like unto a living flame taking for the nonce the shape of the fuel which it consumes in manifesting itself.

If we take for example the perception of a tree, we see that, though it is based upon the substratum of greenness, leafiness, and so forth, which are, in ordinary parlance, its attributes, and as such are universal in their nature, yet out of the base of universality there emerges the notion of a specific or unique being—the sense of the individual tree. It may be *a* mimosa, but ends in being *the* mimosa of the moment.

So all psychic states are really organic wholes based upon the specific *tattva* as the substratum of universality, and indicating the uniqueness of the *tanmâtra* involved, capable of being considered from two different aspects, though yet remaining a unique whole. In the desire-plane the uniqueness manifested would be relatively an abstract one, that of *rasa* or taste, in the mental, the numerator is still more abstract, being of the nature of an idea, a unity, no doubt, but capable of diffusing itself through a number of relatively discrete phenomena, and entering into combinations with other ideas in the mental field. In the physical nervous system the numerator represents the *centre*, while the denominator is represented by the *processes*.

Now all the psychic states have a reference to a larger field beyond. My perception of a tree is based upon a larger something, outside me, called Nature or *Prakriti*. Hence we are not content simply when we know the numerator or denominator of a particular psychic state, but we ever seem to refer the same to a larger something beyond us, which is the permanent possibility of these discrete states, and which is the greater denominator beyond. It is with this greater

denominator that all true science and philosophy are concerned, and which comes back to a student of the mysteries of the Self as the universal laws behind the individual life—laws apparently subversive of the separated individual, but dimly denominating a deeper stratum of being beyond. To a man who has lost his only child by diphtheria, and is thus rudely awakened from a dream of his personal happiness by the incursion of a new element from the domains of bacteriology, the event is no doubt painful. He was content with his personal numerator; he never cared to understand the mystery of the denominator, except so far as it helped to feed his personal being. But to a chastened student of the science of the Self, understanding the unity and totality of the terms of life, and knowing that the personal numerator is but an approximation, a term in a larger series, converging towards but never identical with the pure Self, the incursion of *prākritic* forces dimly denominates a larger synthetic unity. To him it is the faint adumbration of a mysterious larger life, the indication of a larger consciousness behind.

The approximation of the convergence of units therefore opens out to him a vista reaching up to the Infinite. Hitherto he was content with noting the mysterious power or index governing the psychic states; hitherto he was content to see how the isolated units of psychic life were controlled and co-ordinated by a mysterious power, whereby they not only indicated particular objects or things, but also evolved out of this heterogeneous medley of states and *tattvas* the sense of an 'I.' He may have dimly seen how by some unknown force from somewhere the psychic states somehow coalesced and attained to equilibrium in the sense of the 'I' in him. He must have wondered how out of the apparently hostile psychic states there evolved a sense of a *purusha* beyond the same, and how there was a mysterious power working at these psychic states and evolving in each individual a sense of his



own egohood. Unfortunately for us the majority of the humanity of the present day are content with the mystery of the numerator and the denominator of the moment, and modern science has not as yet awakened to grapple with the mysterious and synthesising power behind each organism, whereby, though placed in similar environment, the organic life automatically selects, groups, and collects the units of life from without, in its own particular specific way. This is the mystery of *s'akti*, of life and consciousness operating through and behind each individual, and producing a specific mood of convergence suited to the individual. We have yet to find out how these individual *s'aktis*, as it were, are parts of a larger power of convergence, how the individual powers are utilised for the upbuilding of that organic trend, which sees *I's'vara*, the One 'I,' seated in the heart of all beings; and how the infinity of individuals are dominated and controlled by His Supreme Power, like unto the parts of a huge mechanism full of an infinite number of apparently isolated movements, yet mysteriously co-ordinated to produce the far-off Divine event, towards which the whole of humanity moves.

Let us consider more in detail the process of adding up the series. The modern materialistic science, indued with the idea of universality of matter as the ultimate reality, is cognisant only of that value in things and thoughts which will illustrate its own position. To it psychic states must correspond to an external base or denominator, which, though the permanent possibility of all these states, is yet irreducible by that consciousness. Hence, owing to the persistence of, the denominator, the summation of the series is imperfect leads us only to outer matter, and cannot lead up to the real unity. Modern philosophy, on the other hand, offers another explanation equally partial and unsatisfactory. Modern Theosophy, though speaking of the Self as the ultimate reality, is yet unable to reduce the apparently

irreducible factor of *purusha* and *prakriti*, and hence there is in it that unfortunate persistence of the material, such as the evolution of the Solar Logos, and so forth. To an advanced Theosophist the *summum bonum* of life is to function consciously on the higher planes, and the ideal of life is attained when he is a so-called *jīvanmukta*, preserving still the relics of separated individuality, refined and sublimated though it be, and controlling the process of evolution on the lower spheres. The value and meaning of the 'I' thus consist in the power of correlation and control of the outer *prākritic* forces. The intervention of the finer bodies, which apparently illumines many of the intricate problems of Psychology, is also *prākritic* and materialistic. It does not lead us to the ultimate unity of life, or reduce the apparently irreducible *residuum* called the *tatvas*. Nay, even the bodies themselves are not seen as bases for the universality of life and being, but are often regarded as the results of the separated individual consciousness functioning in an equally separated field of antithetical matter. Hence the theosophical Logos even has a veil of *prakriti* round Him, distinct and separate from His life. He can therefore only mould and vivify the units in antithesis existing in matter according to His own needs. The theosophical *moksha* is like the promotion of a student into a higher standard having its specific field of antithesis.

We must therefore eliminate from our consideration the various current hypotheses of life, which seek to offer us a solution as to the addition of a series of life, and turn to the older Scriptures for light. The ancient science of psychic synthesis is called the science of *Yoga* in the East, and is based principally on the mystic *Sutras* of Patanjali, or rather, is co-ordinated and systematised by them. It will not be out of place here to speak in passing upon the spiritual value of the *Sutra* literature of the Hindu Scriptures. The souls of the Western *Savants*, dominated by that bacterium of the in-

tellectual field called chronology, are apt to run away with the belief that they are the highly finished products of a later intellectual age necessitated by the absence of printing. Whatever be the value of their researches, coloured as they are by a preconception as to the current mode of life and philosophy, we are bound to admit that they have altogether ignored what we may call the grandest aspect of the *Sūtra* literature. The *Sūtra* literature is to modern expressiveness in literature as *buddhi*, or even an abstract idea, is to elaborated thinking. Just as an abstract idea, say of man, gives you the essential characteristics of man, and yet leaves free your intellect, mind, and senses in the process of working out and realising the root-concepts in and through an infinite variety of mental and sense representations thereof, just as a deeper thinker going beyond these ideas comes into contact with certain unvarying types and tendencies of conscious life: so also the ancient *Rishis*, in their infinite wisdom and compassion, realised that each individual must be left free and untrammelled in the process of approximating the fundamental truths and ideas, while yet giving him ample latitude for the satisfaction of the individual element, whereby alone the uniqueness and secondlessness of the Self can be maintained. The *Sūtras* lay down the principal lines, which are as eternal and universal as the lines of the crystal. Round these lines the process of concretion and amplification of thought takes place according to the individual bias. They offer, therefore, the best field for the highest independence of thinking, not that independence which serves now-a-days to form the war-cry of the unthinking mob, but that real vital independence which is the perennial testimony to the transcendence of the consciousness in us.

Yet at the same time humanity is not left without a model; and in India alone we find the strange spectacle of the highest thinkers of the various types, the *Draita* and the

*Advaita*, giving vent to their individual nature, and left free to obey the individual conception of life and being, while yet holding to the fundamental position enunciated by the *S'âstras*. Hence there is no frittering away of energy in the promulgation of inchoate and ill-digested hypotheses, which unfortunately meets the eye of a student of human nature in his survey of European thought, both philosophic and scientific. There is a solidarity and evolutionary trend in the thinking of the old Hindu type; they are loyal to the *S'âstras*, conserving the expenditure of energy, and yet beyond dogmas and tenets, and truly independent, a type which the world should not, in its own interest, permit willingly to die out.

To revert to our subject, every student of the psychic science knows that there is an irreducible *residuum* of the sensuous elements in our thought and ideas. It is the presence of this element in the contents of our consciousness that leads to the projection into being of concrete pictures and actions seen so often in hypnotic phenomena. An idea or suggestion thus tends to visualise and objectify itself in terms of the sensuous psychic elements. This recrudescence is also observable in the life of the aspirants after spiritual life, and is technically called the *dosha* in the Hindu Philosophies. It is the persistence of this element which makes us see in the astral plane the relics or the *replica* of physical things. The truly astral is the plane of *rasa*, of taste and sentiency, in which the units are not of physical form, but of desire or taste. There are also residues of mental activity and of intellectuality, which must be resolved absolutely, ere we can expect the meaning and import of the truly spiritual life in *I's'vara* to shine forth and be a potent factor in our individual lives.

DREAMER.

(To be continued).

## SYMBOLISM IN CHANCELS.

The head of our Lord in all properly constructed crucifixes leans to the north, and the chancels of churches and cathedrals built in days before the symbolism had been forgotten incline the same way.

The reason is obvious. The cosmic date for the Crucifixion of the World-Saviour is the vernal equinox, the time when the sun's path crosses the equator in his northward journey. Now the season at which this takes place is the Passover or Paschal season. Paschal is from "Hal-Pesach," or passing over. The old word Passover represents therefore more than the passing over by the Angel of Death of the Jewish homes in Egypt, more than the passing over the Red Sea ; it is the passing of the sun over the equator, coming with increase of light and shortening of night to the Northern hemisphere ; the sun being here, as elsewhere, the symbol of the Sun of Righteousness, or shall we not rather say, the fire-body of a celestial ambassador whose movements are thus chosen to represent the life-history of his Cosmic Master ? In the same way you will have noticed that the winter solstice, or Dec. 25th, is the cosmic date for the birth of the World-Saviour. I need only refer to Mithra, and to the pre-Christian date of *Dies natalis solis invicti*.

Thus, instead of thoughts like these, which are in all scholars' minds to-day, resolving with Max Müller and his school all aspects of Christianity—aye, of other great religions as well—into solar myths, we may see behind all these astronomical coincidences the Divine plan by which all phenomena, celestial and terrestrial alike, bear witness in the past ages of the universe to that which in the "fulness of time" should be

manifested or brought into manifestation on this planet. I grant that the magnificence of the thought is appalling in its immensity. But to some minds some such thoughts as these are of enormous help in face of the extraordinary recrudescence of materialism as shown by the present attack upon the credibility of miracles.

F.G. MONTAGU POWELL.

"I was told the other day of a young naturalist to whom was given a cocoon of a large and gorgeous species of tropical butterfly, and he waited for it to hatch. When at length the newly awakened creature began to try to break its way through the husk of the cocoon, the young man saw that the task was not an easy one ; it took quite a number of days, and the work of emancipation seemed to make small progress, so he got a pair of scissors, slit the case up, and set the prisoner free. But what was his disappointment to find that, instead of the beautiful, many-hued butterfly he had expected, only a drab and dirty-looking awkward flier emerged. He asked the donor why this was, and was told in reply that he ought not to have meddled with the cocoon, for it was in the very struggle of the butterfly to get out of that cramping environment that the beautiful colours were produced on its wings. Is it so with you and me ? Are we spirits in prison forcing our way out to the life and love eternal ? Yes, that is just what we are. Our master must not break the shell of materiality for us ; but he tenderly watches over and protects us in all the endeavours we put forth in the strength of God to break it from within. And when it is all over and we awake in his likeness, it will be to find that every pang we have endured, all the soul-agony we have ever gone through, has been but the means whereby our spiritual body has been made to express and reproduce the glory of the Lord."—(*Rev. R. J. Campbell, in the Christian Commonwealth.*)

## STRAY NOTES.

The Fourth Annual Meeting of the League was held on Dec. 27th, 28th, and 29th, in the hall of the C. H. C. Girls' School, kindly lent for the occasion. The first and second mornings were devoted to the business meetings of the League, and of its Indian Section respectively; and on the third morning we had the pleasure of listening to a Harikirtana, when the story of Prahlâda was recited with musical accompaniment. Meetings were also held in the afternoon, when papers were read or addresses delivered. On the first day, after a few opening words from the Joint General Secretary, an address was given by Pandit Kshirode Prasad Vidyavinode, in which he told one or two stories illustrating the conditions of spiritual growth. The next day Babu Bhagavan Das gave a lecture on his newly published book, the *Pranava Vâda*, to a large gathering; while on the third afternoon a short paper on "The Philosophy of the Apostle Paul" by Miss C. E. Woods of London, was followed by a discourse on "Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga" by Pandit Bhavani Shanker. There was a fair attendance of members and friends at all the meetings, and a very pleasant and harmonious time was spent. A very happy feature of the gathering was that our General Secretary, Sryt. Upendranath Basu, was, for the first time, able to attend most of the meetings.

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The chief point of general interest in the business meeting of the League was the condition of our magazine, which is far from satisfactory. On the second volume there was a small loss, which, however, has been made good by our guarantors. But the loss on the third volume will be considerably greater, partly because the cost of printing is a little more than it was at the former press, but chiefly because the number of subscribers has further decreased, and is now only just over a hundred. It has therefore been decided by the Council to discontinue the publication after the close of the present volume; so that the next number, which is due in May, will be the last.

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We have received three interesting new books within the last few weeks. The first is a much enlarged edition of *On the Threshold* (compiled by the Dreamer), with a number of interesting and valuable footnotes. The original edition of this little book has been much appreciated by aspirants after spiritual growth, for it is full of wisdom and suggestiveness; and we are sure many of our readers will wish to possess a copy of the book in this improved form.

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Another of the books is a reprint of some stories which appeared in the *Theosophical Review* many years ago over the signature "E. R. Innes"; with several additional stories, which have never before been printed. The writer now discloses herself, Miss Minnie B. Theobald, well-known to our London friends as a violoncelliste. In her preface she tells us how her hours of practice on her instrument would often be followed by "delightful states of meditation and even exaltation," and how on one such occasion she felt impelled to compose. "I felt that nothing short of composition could relieve the intensity of the passion which stirred in me. I laid down my violoncello, picked up a pen . . . . my hand seized an old note-book and began to write, not a symphony to stir the musical world, as I had hoped, but words and ideas foreign both to my thoughts and feelings. . . . . Two hours sped by; then I dropped the pen, and felt quite calm again. I did not know I had written a story. . . . . that my hand had been talking about a little Light-Ship. I read my story with great interest, and wondered what it meant. I still wonder what it means, though it means more to me now than it did at first, for I have gradually come to realise that the stories are all in a way related."

They are well told, and are wonderfully quaint and suggestive. All are so charming that it would be difficult to compare one with another, but perhaps "The Missing Goddess," which gives its name to the book, would be the favourite with most readers, for the delicate humour of the contrast between the ambition and arrogance of the "worldly" priest, and the unconscious modesty and beauty of the truly spiritual child. It contains more than one lesson of especial importance at the present time, which we should all do well to lay to heart.

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The third book is *The Horoscope*, by John Law, a story of which the scene is laid in Ceylon. The interest is well sustained throughout, as we follow the lives of the two strangely contrasted brothers; the one worldly,



ambitious, restless, and over-shadowed and rendered reckless during his six years of wealth and prosperity by the thought of the sudden and horrible death from the bite of a mad dog, which was indicated in his horoscope; the other meditative, drawn to the priesthood from his early childhood, a type of the gentleness and calm, and withal the loving kindness of the Buddhist priest. To most readers, however, the interest will probably lie less in the story than in the picture which is drawn of the effect on a member of one race of his trying to adapt himself to the ideals and ways of another, and also in the sympathetic glimpses which are given of Buddhist ideals. Whether to the lover of thrilling tales, or to the student of human character and of kindred religious faiths, the book contains much that cannot fail to be of interest.

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#### NOTICES.

We have on hand some spare copies of Vols. I and II of *The Pilgrim*, which will now be sold at the reduced price of Re. 1/8 (or 2s.) per volume, postage extra (3 *as.* inland, and 5 *d.* foreign). There are also on sale some copies of the *Transactions*, No. I, consisting of papers and addresses given at the Second Annual Meeting of the League, and reprinted from *The Pilgrim*. The price is 8 *as.* inland, and 9 *d.* foreign, per copy, post free.

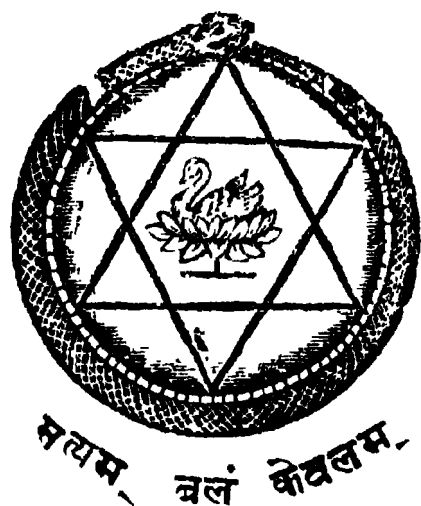
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One of our subscribers in S. Africa is anxious to secure a copy of the three volumes of Dreamer's *Studies in the Bhagavadgītā*, but has failed both in Africa and in England, as they are out of print. Can any of our readers supply a copy, either new or secondhand, of the series? If so, will he kindly write, as soon as possible, to the Editor of *The Pilgrim*, stating the price, and also the condition of the books, if secondhand.

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"Seek not your own life, for that is death. But seek how you can best and most joyfully give your own life away—and every morning for ever fresh life shall come to you from over the hills."

"Do not hurry; have faith. Remember that if you become famous, you can never share the lot of those who pass unnoticed from the cradle to the grave, nor take part in the last heroism of their daily life. If you seek and encompass wealth and ease, the divine outlook of poverty cannot be yours, nor shall you feel all your days the loving and constraining touch of nature and necessity. If you are successful in all you do, you cannot also battle magnificently against odds."—*Edward Carpenter*.



# THE PILGRIM.

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## A TALK ON BOEHME AND THE “DIALOGUES OF THE SUPERSENSUAL LIFE.”

*(Continued from p. 162.)*

In the Third Dialogue, “Concerning Heaven and Hell,” carried on between a disciple and his Master, Böhme combats the orthodox idea of heaven and hell being localities in space. On the contrary the Master maintains, to the bewilderment of the poor disciple, that heaven and hell are contiguous or universally co-extended, are indeed within our own souls. The disciple presses the Master to tell him what happens to the soul of man at death; “does it not,” he asks, “after leaving the body, enter either heaven or hell, as a man entereth a house?” “No,” says the Master, “there is no such kind of entering in, since heaven and hell are everywhere.” All that happens at death is that the physical envelope, or, as he calls it, the outward mortal life, drops away, and the soul is left with heaven or hell developed within itself, in the same state that it was in before the death of the body.

The disciple is puzzled. How, he asks, can heaven and hell both be present in the same room? The Master shows the

possibility. Heaven, he asserts, is but the realisation of the Divine Presence, and the turning in of the will to the love of God ; and hell is the denial of that Presence, and the turning in of the will to the anger of God. He explains it further in these words :—

“Wheresoever thou findest God manifesting Himself in love, there is heaven, without travelling for it one foot ; and wheresoever the anger of God doth more or less manifest, that is, where the will of man is turned against the love principle, and is working for self and in hatred of others, there certainly is hell, in whatsoever place it be.”

There is a sentence in Böhme’s *Threefold Life of Man* which might well be taken for the text of this Dialogue. He says :—“We live and are in God, we are of His substance ; we have heaven and hell in ourselves ; what we make of ourselves, that we are.” This seems in accord with all the best theosophic teaching. You will also see from this quotation that Böhme held a very strong view of man’s free will ; his whole argument throughout the Dialogue being, that the condition or state of the soul is the only heaven or hell that it knows.

The will that hath yielded itself to God entereth into heaven even here, when still in the flesh ; but the spiritually minded souls cannot realise this blessedness as fully as when they have dropped their physical bodies, because their natural life is encompassed with flesh and blood, liable since the Fall to sin and error ; and their souls are environed with the world, which is again contrary in its tendency to the Divine Will. Consequently they are often in anxiety and temptation, and cannot enter as they should into the joy of their Lord. “But,” says Böhme, “the heavenly minded soul in the world, when troubled, sinketh down into the Grace of God, and standeth like a beautiful rose in the midst of thorns, until the kingdom of this world shall drop from it at the death of the body.”

The Master also explains how the wicked who carry hell within themselves, are here blinded to their real wretchedness, since the world puts out their eyes and casts them into a fatal

sleep. This sleep is caused by the intoxication of the pleasures and amusements of sense ; also the blessed light of the sun is still allowed them, and as long as that remains, the pains of hell cannot be fully revealed ; but when their conscience awakes at the death of the body, they realise that they are in hell. He draws a distressing picture of the wicked soul after death, fully apprehending the vanity of earthly pleasures, and yet afraid of God, thinking of Him as anger, not as love, and therefore unable to yield itself to Him to be cleansed and healed. There is, I believe, a great psychological truth behind this statement, for those who work amongst the criminal classes own that the greatest difficulty they have is to make these poor souls believe that God is love, and that He is only waiting for them to turn to Him to cleanse and heal and restore. The wicked, like the fool, denies this ; he says in his heart "there is no God," or, "if He is, He cannot have any love for such as I am " ; and so he builds a wall between his own misery and the Divine Life and Love and Light, which is unable to enter into the soul until the will is yielded.

"Now when a soul of this nature is parted from its body at death, then beginneth the eternal melancholy and despair ; because it now findeth that it is become altogether vanity, even a vanity most vexatious to itself, and a distracting fury and a self-tormenting abomination."

These may seem strong words to our modern ears, accustomed to the soft sayings of latitudinarian Christians ; but the fact is duly accredited by the evidence of psychical research, that the souls of the wicked are restless and tormented, ever seeking to get back into touch with the things of sense, and the material pleasures on which they fed their souls in this life.

What Böhme does not bring out as he should, what indeed he did not grasp—seer as he was—since he had been brought up in all the horror of the mediæval conception of an eternal hell, was the temporary nature of this terrible state, and the truth that light is ever stronger than darkness, and that God's love works even in hell, whose cleansing fires will

eventually purify the soul and bring it into the kingdom of His love. In the story of Dives and Lazarus we see this truth exemplified, for there is no doubt that in the soul of Dives the blessed change is already taking place. He no longer thinks only of his own misery ( a great step forward ), but his distress and anxiety are for the souls of his brethren whom he has left on earth, lest they also come to the place of torment. It is curious that commentators so constantly miss this point, which is so important, touching as it does an otherwise gloomy story of the hereafter with a gleam of hope and light.

Böhme thus describes the state of the wicked soul after death in his peculiarly vivid and forceful way :—

“ And since also the light of God doth not shine in it, nor the love of God enclose it, the soul is moreover a great *darkness*, and is withal an anxious fire-source carrying about a hell in itself, not being able to discern the least glimpse of the light of God or to feel the least spark of His love. Thus it dwelleth in hell, and though it should transfer and cast itself many hundred thousand leagues from its present place to be out of hell, yet still it would remain in its hellish source and darkness.”

We now come to Böhme's theory of the angels.

The disciple asks, if, as the Master explains, heaven and hell are states of consciousness, and not localities in space, where do the intellectual or the spiritual beings abide. And the Master answers that they abide in their own principle, whether it be of love or hate. This is what he calls the “ *ground of being*.” If these spiritual beings dwell in the principle of love, then are they angels, constantly in the presence of God, and doing His work ; if, on the other hand, they are living in the principle of hate and destruction, then are they devils who cannot behold God otherwise than in the wrathful nature. These two classes of spiritual beings who live in the principle of love or hate form the ground of being behind man's soul. That is, man's soul is a sort of battle-ground, where these two opposing principles of love and hate, light and darkness, are in constant conflict.

The Master further explains to the disciple that when he does not live in his selfhood or will, but is surrendered to the will of God, then the holy angels dwell with him, and are round about him ; but when he dwells in self-seeking, self-will, that is, the seeking and willing of the lower, personal self, then the devils abide with him and take up their abode in his soul.

So everything works back to Böhme's old original idea, which we considered in our article on the first two Dialogues—the importance of the will. Is the will surrendered to God, then all is well, and the angels, who are in the principle of love and dwell in God, will be the companions of man and guide him on his heavenly way. Is the will turned from God and given over to selfish and material lusts and desires, then the devils, which represent the opposite principle of hate, dwell in the soul, and will be its companions after the death of the body. This is very much the idea of another mystic of modern times, Anna Kingsford. She, with Böhme, thinks that the whole difference in man's salvation or condemnation lies in the fact as to whether the will is turned outwards, or, as she terms it, gravitates to material lusts and pleasures, or inwards to God, the spiritual centre. Adela Curtis, a mystic of a still more recent date, puts the same truth in these words :—

“The Eternal is always with us, whether we know it or not. The whole difference between hell and heaven is to dwell in It or out of It. To know It (the Eternal), dwell in It, be at home in It, is heaven. Not to know It, to dwell outside of It, to feel a stranger to It, is hell. To devote ourselves to learning how to know It, feel It, obey It, serve It, is the only true use of life.”

Here, though the impersonal pronoun is used, there is no doubt that by the Eternal Miss Curtis means the same as Böhme, when he talks of God and the love of God.

In another place we find her again echoing Böhme's thought :—

“We should never think of the Kingdom of Heaven as a future state, to hap-

pen outwardly in time and space. It will indeed so come, but not until we learn to dwell in It as the ever present within."

It is interesting to note that this 20th century writer in the full intellectual freedom of modern thought, speaks the same language as the old 16th century shoemaker brought up in the rigid Lutheran Protestantism of his time and country.

Böhme's thought seems to be that, though in the world the opposing forces of love and hate are in conflict, as soon as the soul leaves the body at death, it is absorbed back into its own principle, in which it has really lived whilst on earth, and so it truly goeth (as was said of the traitor Judas) to its own place, and receiveth suitable companions, be they angels or devils, according as it has lived in the principle of love or hate.

The Master thus explains to his disciple :—

"When the will of God in anything willeth, there is God manifested, and in the very manifestation of God do the angels dwell, but when in any creature the will of God is denied there the angels cannot dwell, for that soul or creature is without God's will."

This, of course, is one of the great paradoxes of the spiritual life, that the human will finds its true freedom only when it is yielded to the Divine, and no longer serves the self. As Tennyson says in his *In Memoriam*.

"Our wills are ours we know not how,  
Our wills are ours to make them Thine."

Perhaps one of the most interesting parts in this Dialogue is the description of the Last Judgment; the disciple asks for light on this mystery, and the Master shows him how the Christ manifested His unity with all that is, in the picture He gives of the final judgment ; for every act of kindness, every cup of cold water given to the least of His brethren, is accepted as done to Himself ; and every neglect of His little ones is condemned as a neglect of Him. Thus we see that Böhme rests the final judgment of the soul in the principle of love and in that alone.

Lastly (and this again is of great interest) the disciple asks what happens to the souls who fiercely contend about the religion of Christ, and in His name slander and revile and persecute one another; to which Böhme gives a clear and emphatic answer, as needful now as in the Middle Ages.

"All such," he declares, "have not *known* Christ," and they are but a type and figure of heaven and hell striving with each other for the victory.

"All rising, swelling pride, which contendeth about opinion, is an image of self. And whoever hath not faith and humility, nor liveth in the spirit of Christ, which is love, is only allied with the anger of God, and helpeth forward the victory of the *personal self*."

Here is a touch of theosophic truth which it is interesting to notice, for it shows that Böhme distinguished the spiritual self from the personality. The last question of the disciple, namely, "Why God allows such strife and contention in the world" is answered by Böhme in a passage at once characteristic and forceful.

He maintains that the strife is allowed here, that the free will of man may have play, that every life may cause and find its own sentence; or, as Anna Kingsford says, "be the arbiter of his own destiny"; also that the saints who fight against evil here may find joy arise in them out of death, by the destruction of all the lower properties of their nature. So may their life, he concludes, "freed from the painfulness of nature, possess another world and live in light and love."

This is Böhme's idea in his own language:—

"Therefore the joy of the saints must arise in them out of death, as the light arises out of a candle by the destruction and consumption of it in its fire, that so the life may be freed from the painfulness of nature and possess another world.

And as the light hath another property than the fire has, for it giveth and yieldeth, whereas the fire draweth in and consumeth, so the holy life of meekness springeth through the death of self-will, and then God's will of love willeth and doeth all. For thus the Eternal One hath attained feeling and separability and brought itself forth again with the feeling through death in great joyfulness, that



there might be an eternal delight in the Infinite Unity, and an eternal cause of joy... Herein lieth the mystery of the hidden Wisdom of God."

Here we see another touch of theosophic truth, namely that the Supreme Unity Itself needs the *many* through whom It can express Itself.

As to the ungodly and wicked, we trust that Böhme would see more eye to eye with us were he alive now, that he would realise that they are but younger souls learning by experience, and that they too will in time leave the folly of wickedness, and arise and go to the Father, who is ever love, whatever sins we commit. "With Whom there is no variable-ness nor shadow of turning," and Who waits through the ages for the soul of man to turn to Him.

The Fourth Dialogue, "The way from Darkness to Illumination," might well be called the "Drama of the Soul", for in it Böhme in a series of vivid pictures shows forth the soul under the various aspects through which it passes from darkness to light. These changes are all well known to students of the Mystic Way.

First we have the fall of the soul from a state of primeval innocence in the Paradise of God into the kingdom of this world. Here it is met by the Devil, the angelic being, who, as Böhme told us in the last Dialogue, lives in the principle of hate and destruction. Under the influence of the Devil the soul falls into the lowest state of misery, being impressed by the foul image of the four-headed beast, which covers up its original fair image, given to it by God in Paradise. This image Böhme calls a four-headed beast, because he considers that the four vices, pride, covetousness, envy, and anger or hate form the very groundwork of hell. In whatsoever soul they are manifested there is hell, without, as he truly says, "travelling one foot to find it." In this terrible state the soul meets the redemptive principle of God's love manifested in the Christ, Who sends a ray of divine light and love into the

soul, and appeals to it to repent, promising that He will deliver it from that monstrous deformed image which it has become, and restore it to the image it had in Paradise. The first effect of this encounter is that the soul realises its own hideousness, and sees itself to be in hell in the wrath of God. It is thus thrown into the very greatest misery, but the voice of Christ speaks again, saying, "Repent and forsake vanity, and thou shalt attain my Grace."

From that time on the soul turns from evil, and passes through all the stages so well known to mystics.

First, as E. Underhill points out in the *Mystic Way*, after the joy of rebirth into the spiritual state, comes the difficult period of growth and effort; the long *viaticum of ascent* in which the developing soul remakes its inner world. This process, under all its countless forms, has ever been termed purgation. From this the soul passes to the illuminative state, where it gains a clearer view of the Divine Reality. Grace is given to it, by which it lives more and more in that Presence. New powers are developed, such as contemplation and ecstasy, but the soul is not allowed to remain for ever in the state of bliss. It is plunged back into darkness, that dark night of the soul so well known to St. John of the Cross, where it is finally cleansed of all attachment to the selfhood, and utterly surrendered to the purposes of Divine Life. From that state of utter selflessness the soul is transmuted into the final state, the unitive, in which it knows its oneness with the Divine, attains Christhood, and can say with the Master, "I and the Father are one." Thus its being is completed, and it realises that bliss, which is of the essential nature of the Divine.

After this brief outline, we will follow the story a little more closely as Böhme tells it. The Dialogue is eventually carried on between a distressed soul and an enlightened one, but it begins between the soul and the Devil, who meets it after

its fall from Paradise, in the kingdom of this world. The soul is full of curiosity, which the Evil One makes use of to ensure its downfall ; for the story runs rather on the lines of the temptation in the Garden of Eden.

The soul wants to understand the creatures of this world whom it meets, and the Devil, after sneering at its lack of power to apprehend anything but their outside or appearance, instructs it how to attain the knowledge of their essence. He teaches it to turn its will or desire away from God and goodness into the creature, that so there may arise within it a lust to taste of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, promising it eventually that it will be able to know all things and apprehend their inner essence, even as he does.

The soul listens to the voice of the tempter, and eats of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and immediately all the properties of the lower nature awake in it. These evil properties Böhme classes, as we have seen, under four heads:—pride, covetousness, envy, and hate or anger. Let us consider them separately.

*Pride* : the desire to be great, mighty and powerful, to bring all things into subjection unto oneself. This Böhme considers the first cause of the fall in angels and men. It is the very opposite of the Christ-spirit, which is the essence of love, and only desires to serve and minister unto others. It was to the instinct of pride that the Devil appealed in the temptation of Christ : “All these things will I give unto thee, the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, if thou wilt fall down and worship me”; that is, if thou wilt worship *power* and live for self. Böhme tells us that this spirit despises humility and equality, esteeming itself the only prudent, witty and cunning one, and accounts everything folly that is not according to its own humour and liking.

*Covetousness*, the second evil property, is the desire to draw all things to oneself for one’s own possession. Trust in

God is broken, so the soul, desiring to look after itself, covets all the creatures of the earth, its metals and treasures, and becomes greedy and fretful and empty of joy.

Thirdly *Envy* awakes, a hellish poison and torment, making the life a fierce enmity to God and all creatures. Envy is the sting of covetousness, it hateth and would destroy that which covetousness cannot draw to itself, and by this hellish passion the noble love of the soul for God is smothered.

Fourthly arises another torment like fire, *Hate* or *Anger*, which would murder and remove out of the way all who would not be subject to pride. Thus the ground of hell, which Böhme calls the Anger of God, is manifested in the soul, which loseth the fair Paradise of God, and becomes "such a worm as the fiery serpent."

After this fine piece of psychology, Böhme draws a vivid picture of the soul in its fallen state, under the influence of the four vices ; ruling on earth according to the will of the Devil, who leads it on from one vice to another, until it would have been utterly destroyed, but that it meets with the redemptive principle of God. We have seen in the short *résumé* I gave, how after the encounter with Christ, when a ray of divine light is given to the soul, it falls into the greatest anguish, on realising its own hideousness and deformity, and is only saved from despair by the voice of Christ, Who promises it grace to conquer the evil and then to be restored to its original noble image.

Then another picture is drawn of the difficulties that beset every soul that resolutely turns from evil. The central will of the soul cleaves to God, but the habits of years still cling, evil inclinations and desires yielded to in the past cannot be overcome by one effort of the will. Daily and constant must be the struggle, and often the poor soul is overcome and feels it must begin all its work over again. This is, of course, the period of purgation, the difficult ascent Godwards, which

every pilgrim of Eternity has to go through. The soul would fain go forward to God, but its thoughts continually fly from Him back into earthly delight, and even in the very midst of prayer sensual desire may surge up, drowning, as it were, the soul's effort to apprehend spiritual beauty. It is tempted to despair and to turn back to sin, since spirituality seems impossible, but in the height of its distress, by the mercy of God, it meets an enlightened soul and the rest of the Dialogue is carried on between the enlightened and the distressed soul, till the latter is finally reclaimed.

The enlightened soul shows the distressed one, who complains that the countenance of God is hid from it, and that it cannot come into His rest, that the cause of its trouble is that the groundwork of hell, *viz.*, these four vices, pride, covetousness, envy, and anger, are not wholly destroyed in it, and therefore the Devil has still power over it, and is able to enter in and suggest evil desires. The only way, says the enlightened one, to get out of this terrible condition is to sink down into the mercy and love of God, and to utterly forsake that which it calls its own will, by which means all the evil properties will grow weak, faint, and ready to die, and the soul will revert back into its original likeness, the fair image which it wore in the Paradise of God before the defacing image of evil, the earthly image of lust and desire, had been added to it.

The distressed soul, horrified to hear that it still bears the image of the Evil One, is again tempted to despair, but the power of Christ and the grace of God prevail, and give it hope, and it struggles on up the steep ascent Godwards, still finding great difficulties, till it meets the enlightened one again, who shows it still more of the depths of the negation of self to which the soul must submit, ere it can rise to the spiritual life. It also gives it some practical rules by which the death of the lower self may be attained.

First with regard to wealth and all worldly goods. These,

instead of being used in the service of the self, are to be held as trusts from God, and spent, as far as possible, in the service of the poor, whom the disciple, instead of disdaining for their want of outward beauty and refinement, should love and succour.

Secondly, instead of thinking of this world as the all, the soul is to remember that this is not his native country, that he is in reality a spirit like Christ, and that he cannot be a Christian unless the spirit and power of Christ so live in him that he becometh wholly subject to it.

Here Böhme seems at one with all theosophic teaching, proclaiming with it that the spiritual self is the only reality in man, and that it is his duty to harmonise his consciousness with that spiritual being and not with the passing personality.

Also the narrow way to perpetual ascension Godwards can be trodden only with the help of certain qualifications. First and foremost of these is humility, for this spiritual ascent is not to be undertaken in the soul's own strength, nor aided by the soul's own powers, but in the power and grace of the indwelling Christ. Surely a modern mystic echoes this same thought, when in *Light on the Path* the disciple is bidden to stand aside in the coming battle and let the Warrior within fight in him, for so only can victory be won. The passage is probably familiar to you all. It runs thus:—

"Stand aside in the coming battle, and, though thou fightest, be not thou the Warrior. Look for the Warrior within, let Him fight in thee. Take His orders for battle and obey them."

Secondly, there must be *purity of thought*. The mind is to be guarded, lest evil thought and inclination enter in and deface the image of Christ.

Thirdly, there must be uprightness of deed and a firm and pure will fixed in its resolution never to return to its old idols.

Then, according to Böhme most important of all, there

must be *forgiveness of enemies*, and a resolution to meet them in love ; so will there be left, as he says, no creature, person, or thing, able to take hold of the will and captivate it.

Finally, the soul must be ready to forsake all earthly things for the love of God. All arrogance and self-esteem must be humbled and brought low ; the soul must know itself only as a servant of God, a steward in the office where the Lord has placed it. In this way the soul will get rid of the bestial, deformed image, and recover the Divine Image, be delivered from present anguish and return to the original rest.

After giving these instructions, the enlightened one leaves, and the poor soul begins to put in practice all that it has been told ; but it still finds the gates of heaven shut against it, until it remembers that it must desire nothing of God, but only to sink itself down in God, forsaking its own will and desiring only His.

Accordingly the soul sinks down and dies utterly to self. The picture that follows is evidently a description of the Dark Night of the Soul so well known to mystics. The soul speaks not one word in the presence of God, and for very shame it dare not lift up its eyes to Him. It is drawn down into the abyss of horror where it yields itself to death, desiring nothing else but to die as Christ died, for the redemption of others, and so sink into the mercy of God. Then suddenly in the darkness the Love of God, as a great light, penetrates through it and it is made exceedingly joyful. It tastes of the sweetness of God, and His promised truth. The wedding of the soul is kept and solemnised, the noble Sophia espoused to the soul, and the seal-ring of Christ's essence impressed into its substance, and it is again received as a child and heir of God.

But its troubles are not quite over, for the devil, meeting it, tells it that the happy change in its condition is due not to God, but to its own imagination, and the world also sneers

at it for trying to lead the spiritual life. The soul is perplexed and troubled, but still goes on striving, for, as Böhme puts it, the "burning fire of love sown in it had raised in it a vehement and continual thirst for the divine sweetness." It continues to pray and act aright, and for the last time it is met by the enlightened one, who shows it that it is but following its Master on the way of the Cross, that His presence is being manifested in it, and that Christ is performing in it the same process that He Himself went through when in the world. The enlightened one also reminds the distressed soul that by its trials it is strengthened, as a young plant is strengthened by the wind and storms it has to survive, for so it draws virtue from the solar life within ; also that through these trials the Eternal Christ is begotten within and the soul becomes what it ever was intended to be, a "Temple of God," this indeed being the purpose for which it was created. Thus through the grace of God and the help of the enlightened one, the soul newly born is brought into the divine harmony of heaven, and becomes one with the Supreme. So is it taken to its true rest, having learned what each of us must learn for himself, that :--

"Christ's life is our way, and by the path of holy patience we walk to Him who is our Goal."

I should like to say one word in conclusion, which is that, as theosophic students, these Dialogues deserve our serious attention. For all through Böhme insists on that fundamental theosophic truth, that the reality of the soul is its spiritual essence ; which he calls the Christ within. But the theosophic terms, the higher or divine Self, practically mean the same thing ; though they lose a little of the love influence from being associated only with the Self, and not with the Divine Master—the Lover of the soul. He shows also that all the troubles the soul encounters, arise from the fact of its associating itself with the lower personality, instead of with



the spiritual self ; and its redemption is only finally accomplished, when it has thus learned to know itself. Finally, shining through all these Dialogues as a pure crystal, is the other basic theosophic doctrine that "As the Master is, so must the disciple become." No lower standard is permitted. Towering above all creatures human and angelic stands the Christ, the Word of God, who was manifested for us Westerns in the personality of Jesus of Nazareth. To that image we have all to be conformed, for, as St. Paul says :—"We, be holding as in a mirror the glory of God, are changed into the same image from glory to glory."

E. THURLOW HARRISON.

"I believe that there is in life a great and guarded city, of which we may be worthy to be citizens. We may, if we are blest, be always of the happy number, by some kindly gift of God ; but we may also through misadventure and pain, through errors and blunders, learn the way thither. And sometimes we discern the city afar off, with her radiant spires and towers, her walls of strength, her gates of pearl ; and there may come a day, too, when we have found the way thither, and enter in ; happy if we go no more out, but happy, too, even if we may not rest there, because we know that, however far we wander, there is always a hearth for us and welcoming smiles.....

The city is known by many names, and wears different aspects to different hearts. But one thing is certain —that no one who has entered there is ever in any doubt again. He may wander far from the walls, he may visit it but rarely, but it stands there in peace and glory, the one true and real thing for him in mortal time and in whatever lies beyond."

(*Arthur Christopher Benson*)

## BHAKTI IN HINDUISM.

(Concluded from p. 183.)

### V.—PRELIMINARY CONDITIONS.

When the predisposition to *bhakti* has been fairly awakened, the question that is instinctively suggested to the mind of the aspirant is :—“ What must I do to qualify myself for the *bhakti* path ? ” If the aspirant’s development in the past has been based on sound principles, wisely avoiding the tendency to exaggeration, there is a fair possibility that this development will now proceed apace, without forfeiting its keynote of balance and harmony. Balance, in occult development, is a virtue which may, without exaggeration, be called the sheet anchor of life. It is a supremely constructive virtue, and its chief function is to preserve harmony in the organism. It keeps the mind, on the one hand, from yielding to the fiery and eccentric mobility of *rajoguna*, and, on the other, from relapsing into the heavy soporific inertia of *tamoguna*. In the drama of evolution, *rajo* and *tamogunas* constitute the twin strongholds in which reside vast hosts of the soul’s resistant *karma*. At every step the soul makes in advance, they issue in their mighty legions, and seek to overwhelm it, sometimes by subtle strategy, sometimes by sheer weight. In this fierce contest, balance, and its allied virtues of fortitude, endurance, equanimity, *etc.*, furnish the chief weapons wherewith to assail the foe.

When the aspirant has asked himself the question which has been formulated above, his foremost duty is to appeal to his *S’âstras* for authoritative directions or friendly counsel as regards the unknown future that stretches, hazy and uncer-

tain, before him. And when he approaches their august portal and gives a timid and reverential knock a thousand cheerful faces, beaming with a heavenly smile, at once bid him a hearty welcome, and offer to initiate him into the secrets of the path of love. And soon he experiences mixed emotions. When he is told what a glorious path *bhakti* is, what a power the *bhakta*, how *bhakti* achieves everything, how the *bhakta* refuses everything except Him and His service, how there is none dearer to Him than the *bhakta*,—he is dazzled, and he knows not which to admire more, the innate majesty of the path, or the genius of the artist which has endowed his word-picture with a perennial power of intoxication. But, as he glances from *bhakti* in fruition to *bhakti* in the making, the fairy vision which floated gaily on his mental horizon gradually vanishes. The eye which beams with divinest compassion, also frowns. She who is the tenderest giver is also a hard, stern, taskmistress. The aspirant finds that the upper zones of *bhakti* are indeed in perpetual vernal bloom, but that the lower approaches are overgrown with tough, dense, thorny brambles. He finds that a vast amount of preliminary spade-work, hard, sustained, vigilant, must be done, that the heart must be thoroughly weeded, the character must be purified, and unremitting wide-awake vigilance maintained to guard against risks of lapse, that purity of body and mind must be secured, and the most careful cautionary measures adopted to maintain it; that a great many other things should be done, and many more should be *not* done, before the delicate shoot of *bhakti* can sprout and grow. He finds, in other words, that there is a crowded programme of injunctions and prohibitions which must be scrupulously adhered to and carefully observed. They constitute a code of what for want of a better term may be called indispensable preliminary conditions. Assuming that the aspirant is in earnest—there is no room for sluggards in abnormal development—and that every minute

is valuable to him, it is his obvious duty to study them, to tabulate them, and, when necessary, find means to carry them straightway into effect. And before he does so, he must realise that in the path he is about to enter, determination and courage are essential, that half-hearted dilatory action is mischievous and even ruinous, that his watchword and his principle of action should be thoroughness, that there can be no compromise with evil, that on the issue of the struggle he is about to face hangs his whole fateful future. A resolution like this is the more essential in view of the fact that he will now encounter the indomitable and remorseless opposition of his own *karma* which will intercept his path and resist inch by inch every step he makes in advance. It is therefore very necessary that he should take a prompt and accurate stock of what he is required to do, including, of course, what he is commanded not to do. In other words, he should have a clear idea of what actions come under the class of *bidhi* rules, and what belong to the class of *nishedha* rules. And first as regards the *bidhi* (positive commandment) rules.

Both the classes of commandments are in general directed to one great end, purification. The normally impure human *upādhi*, in which vice and virtue (*pāpam* and *punyam*) enter in equal ratio, is in its original condition an unfit vehicle for the expression of spirituality. It must be thoroughly purified, and the purity steadily and continuously maintained, before it can vibrate in responsive thrill to the ethereal touch of spirit. This is a law which commands, on pain of heavy suffering and inevitable disappointment, an unflinching compliance. Without a thorough purification *bhakti* will not arise. The teaching of the *S'āstra* is most explicit and emphatic on this point. Says the *Brahma Purānam*, Chap. 238 :—

“So long as the destruction of man's sins accumulated during (many) births does not take place, *bhakti* to *Vāsudeva* Who pervades the world does not arise.”

That illustrious authority, *Bhīshma*, repeats the same idea in a slightly different form ; when speaking to *Yudhishthira* (*Mahābhāratam*, *S'ānti Parva*, Chap. 204), he says :—

“*Jñāna* arises in men on the extinction of sinful actions (and) sees self in *buddhi* as in a transparent mirror.”

In Hinduism the destruction of sin is an essential part of purification. The question naturally suggests itself, how can we procure the destruction of sin ; is it within human competence to do it. The question is so intrinsically important, affecting as it does the whole future of the aspirant to *bhakti* that it deserves careful consideration.

On this point the teaching of the *S'iva Purāṇam* is beautifully suggestive. It assigns to all *karma* three organic states or stages, *viz*, first the *vīja* (seed) stage, secondly the *vridhhi* (growth) stage, and finally the *bhoga* (the working out of the consequences) stage. So long as it continues in the first or the second stage it is amenable to the creator's control, and can even be extinguished by the application of the proper means. These two stages constitute what may be called the potential zone of *karma*, in which it is subject to modification or even complete extinction. On reaching the third stage, *karma* passes into the zone of kinetic action, in which it is entirely beyond the creator's control and is extinguished only after it has left its characteristic effect on his body. Needless to add that it is at this stage that *karma* is precipitated into the stock of *prārabdha* actions.

Following the above classification of *karma*, sin, which is an integral part or aspect of it, may be divided into the three classes of *sanchita*, *kriyamāna*, and *prārabdha*, or into the three stages of *vīja*, *vridhhi*, and *bhoga*. For practical purposes there is no very great difference between the two classifications.

And first, as regards *prārabdha* or *bhoga* sin, the unanimous and explicit teaching of the *S'āstra* is that its headlong

momentum, which has definitely reached the stage of kinetic action, can only be exhausted by actual suffering. But, while this suffering cannot be evaded (in the wondrous mechanism of man's body it will patiently lie in ambush for *kalpas*, and, seizing the proper moment, will spring upon its victim), its action can be weakened in various ways—by fervent worship, by pilgrimages, by propitiatory appeals to the planetary deities, and so on. These may be summed up under two distinctive classes of measures—purificatory and protective. In a body which has been purified by devoted worship and pilgrimage, the action of evil which is inevitable will be necessarily and proportionately mild. Protective measures consist in the creation around a man's body, by the agency of *mantras*, of a protective envelope, which may serve pretty much the same purpose as an umbrella does in the sun or the rain. But whatever the measures adopted, the *prârabdha* sin can never be *altogether* evaded; on the contrary, its action, as the etymology of the term signifies, has already *commenced*, and must be exhausted by *bhoga* or suffering.

It is far otherwise with the classes of sins called *sanchita* and *kriyamâna* which can be extinguished without the necessity of *bhoga* or actual personal suffering. There are innumerable *S'âstric* texts which support this view. One of the very best in point of condensed brevity and directness occurs in the *S'iva Purânam* :—

“But if a man, having reached *Kâsi*, takes his bath in the *Gangâ*, then there takes place the extinction of his *sanchita* and *kriyamâna karma*; the *prârabdha* is not destroyed.”\*

The destruction of *sanchita* and *kriyamâna karma* is thus an assured certainty resting upon the bed rock of explicit and emphatic *S'âstric* testimony. That which serves as a powerful breakwater against the headlong fury of the

\* Chap. 51. *Jnâna Samhitâ*.—*S'iva Purânam*.

*prārabdha*, answers with infinitely surer efficacy in the case of the *sanchita* and *kriyamāna* karma. *Jñāna* and *dhyanā* destroy sin; before the sanctity of the one and the majesty of the other it falls dead, beyond the possibility of resurrection. It retreats into latency in that body which is purified by the *tīrtha*, which is magnetised by the worship of the *Devatā*, which is revived by *tapas*. Where all or any of these agencies act jointly, the effect on sin is necessarily cumulative.

The action of these five agents on *prārabdha* sin is to weaken its effect, so as to make it endurable, and on *sanchita* and *kriyamāna* sin to extinguish it. But there is another, and an altogether different, type of agency in the extinction of sin which is rapidly falling into neglect in this intellectual age, but which occupies a position of very considerable importance in Hinduism as an institution designed to purify the body. *Prāyaschityam*, penance, is an organic part of the Hindu theory of sin, and constitutes a remarkable feature of the Hindu religious system. Built into an elaborate fabric by the titanic intellects who have constructed and perfected the *Saṁtana Dharma* system, it staggers the *Kali Yuga* pigmy not more by its dimensions than by the marvellous precision with which it provides each transgression with an appropriate sacrifice. We are not concerned here, nor can we afford space, to study the theory of *prāyaschityam* except to state that Hinduism proclaims to all sinners, in grand and resounding notes, the consoling truth that all transgressions, of whatever kind or degree, from the most venial to the foulest and darkest, except the *prārabdha*, can purchase remission and forgiveness by appropriate sacrifices. From this point of view the question of *prāyaschityam* possesses a twofold importance. To the sin-laden soul struggling, hopeless and demoralised, in the wilderness of his cheerless spiritual night, it holds out the prospect of a release, of a bright, warm, rosy dawn. And in

exactly the same ratio in which it removes the pollution of past sin clinging in dense viscous layers to the soul, it purifies the body and endows it with power of response to the diviner melody of spirit. To the soul that aspires to attune itself to the constructive harmony of divine love *prâyaschityam* is an indispensable pre-requisite :—

“The man who has been well purified by *prâyaschityam* (penance) obtains the fruits of all actions. Whatever actions are done, O twice-born ones, by those who are wanting in *prâyaschityam*, all those (actions) go without fruits. (Such men) do not obtain the fruits of an action.”—(*Vrihannâradya Purânâ*, Chap. 28).

It will be seen that in this view *prâyaschityam* is lifted out of the region of stale and commonplace conventionalities into that of a profound scientific necessity. It is one of the fundamental laws of spiritual harmony. Sin propagates itself in concentric waves of disharmony in the spiritual regions, and one of its fatal but inevitable effects is to destroy the immutable sequence of cause and effect, to stifle and otherwise hold in check the effect which is destined in the fulness of time to flow from a cause. Sin crosses hope with disappointment, shadows effort with failure, foredooms actions to end in disaster, divorces the effect from the cause. It thus effectually sterilises the great and universal law of causation. The institution of *prâyaschityam* is designed to provide an ample and efficacious corrective to the disruptive action of sin. It brings balm to the shattered spiritual system ; revives the law of spiritual harmony ; re-establishes the normal correlation between cause and effect.

As already stated, it is both unnecessary and impossible to treat fully of *prâyaschityam*, of the penances prescribed for each transgression, which would require many volumes. We can only briefly glance at some of those points which possess an interest for the student of *bhakti*. According to *Manu* three distinct classes of transgressions, consisting of commissions and omissions, come under the purview of



*prâyaschityam*, viz., the not doing of actions which are commanded to be done, the doing of actions which are reprobated, and strong attachment to the sense objects. *Prâyaschityam*, says *Bhîshma* (*Mahâbhârata*, *S'ânti Parva*, Chap. 35), consists of three broad classes, *tapas*, *karma*, (such as *yajñas*, etc.), and gift. The same illustrious authority lays down the qualifications which are essential to entitle a man to receive the benefit of penance. Only the man who is a believer and who has faith is declared eligible for it. The unbeliever and the unfaithful, and the man in whom pride and hate predominate are disqualified. Where these conditions have been complied with, and the atonement practised in conformity with *S'âstrie* injunction, the sinner is purified *provided there is no recurrence of the sin atoned for*.

The venerable *Manu* echoes the same commandment :—

“If one, having consciously or unconsciously done a reprehensible action, desires release therefrom, he should never do it a second time.”

The *Saura Purânam* (XI, 44) repeats the identical statement almost word for word, and says that a fresh commission of the transgression which has been atoned for renders the whole penance utterly nugatory, and brings the old stock of sin back into life again. In order evidently to invest the three classes of penance spoken of above with additional weight, *Bhîshma* repeats the statement in Chapter 97 and says that by *tapas*, *yajña* and gift, sin is entirely extinguished.

A form of *tapas*, within the reach of all, and easy of practice, is repentance. Without repentance all other forms of atonement are ineffectual. Says the *Saura Purânam* :—

“Repentance is verily the cause of all forms of atonement spoken of above. The sin, from which that (repentance) is absent, never goes, for a certainty.”

To this *Manu*, and following him other law-givers, add the penance of a public avowal, to which they attribute a like efficacy. *Manu's* remarks on the subject are most lucid and informing :—

"If a man having done an unrighteous action proceeds to speak of it before the public, like a snake from its slough, he is released from that sin. And in whatsoever degree his mind censures an evil action which has been done, to that degree his body is released from the consequences of it. A man who, having, done a sinful action, repents, is released therefrom ; the resolution, I will not do so again, completely purifies him."—(*Manu XI. 229—231*).

Forgiveness (*kshamā*) is recommended by *Manu* as a virtue the practice of which destroys all sins, including even the great ones.

But there is a different kind of atonement from which its harsher features are absent, which appeals to the noblest emotions of the heart, and which the literature of *bhakti* has acclaimed in one voice as at once the best and the simplest, the most enduring in its results, the most kindling in its powers of transformation. It is the mental repetition of the Name. Says the *Vishnu Purāṇam* (II. 6):—

"Of all those endless atonements consisting of *tapas*, *karma*, etc., the best is the repetition of the Name *Krishna*. For the man in whom, on having done evil, repentance arises, the one penance that is best is the repetition of the Name *Hari*. Morning, noon, evening, night, repeating the Name of *Nārāyaṇa*, man obtains the instantaneous extinction of sin."

The *Vrihannārādiya Purāṇam* is equally explicit on the point :—

"He who is free from attractions, etc., who is attended by repentance, who is kind to all life, even though he were possessed of the great sins or of all the sins, is instantly released from them all on attentively repeating the Name of *Vishnu*, since *Vishnu* is supreme *tapas*."

The *S'aivā Purāṇas* echo with equal emphasis the same ringing note, of fervent exhortation. Says the *S'iva Purāṇam*, that noblest monument to the glory of *S'iva* :—

"The wise man who repeats *Rudra*, *Rudra*, thrice a day is released from all sins by virtue of recounting (the glory of) *Nīlkantha*."

The *Saura Purāṇam* which is an impassioned hymn to the glory of *S'iva* says (Chap. 7) :—

"The mortal who, incidentally, sportively, or out of temptation or of fear or even of ignorance, takes the Name *Hara*, is released from all sin."

The same extraordinary, or possibly still more incredible, results follow when one has sufficient soul-power to take refuge in the Lord.

“The man who is a murderer of *Brāhmanas* and has other sins, and is execrated by society, on taking refuge in *S'ankara*, is released from all sin.”\*

It is indeed true that in the pre-*bhakti* stage an exaltation of the soul, such as is implied in the act of taking refuge, is rare. But who knows? The psychology of a mind steeped in great crimes has in all ages been a profound mystery. What is beyond the power of dull and virtuous mediocrity has been found possible of accomplishment by the hardened and abandoned criminal. By a mysterious law of psychomechanics the criminal could draw upon his vast stock of sinister energy to create, or, what is better still, by a grandiose effort of will effectually transmute it into an attitude of surrender. The *S'āstra* teems with countless instances of such dramatic transformations. Let not the criminal and the man of sin despair. *Bhakti* has accomplished, and will accomplish, the impossible.

It is unnecessary at this stage to develop this point further, although its importance can by no means be overestimated. It is the imperishable rock-bed of *bhakti*, and to it from time immemorial in hours alike of darkness and sunshine the *bhakta* has turned for inspiration and solace.

The *nishedha* (prohibitive commandment) rules, to the consideration of which we now proceed, naturally possess a far greater binding power. A non-observance of a *bidhi* rule does not in many cases involve very serious consequences beyond arresting or disorganising the progress of the soul; but non-observance of a *nishedha* rule means in many cases serious breach of a clear duty and involves disastrous consequences. The *nishedha* rules of the *bhakti* path cover a fairly wide area,

\* *Saura Purānam*, Chapter 52.

and some of them aim at a standard of moral perfection so high that its realisation would require the sustained and devoted efforts of a whole life. The callow and flippant critic might turn away from them, saying, "Oh ! they are all negative rules which would do very well indeed for the school-boy's copy-book headings." This betrays a gross ignorance of the laws of the higher life. There are stages in the evolution of life in which the so-called negative rules carry a greater weight than the positive. In the present work-a-day world the possession of positive virtues such as truth, honesty, charity, constitutes a claim to regard and draws upon the possessor the admiring plaudits of humanity. In the world of spirit—in the higher spiritual life—such possession is a matter of course ; it is an indispensable qualification, and confers on the possessor no particular merit. Virtue in spiritual life is no merit indeed, but vice is serious demerit, and, in too many cases, is fateful of tragic possibilities. It may spell irretrievable disaster, arrestation of progress, or, what is more ruinous still, a sudden and desperate fall. In the higher life, then, the relationship between the two classes of rules is reversed, and the negative rule becomes more important and more far-reaching in its effects than the positive. To the neophyte in *bhakti* a catalogue of the virtues that are pleasing to the Lord is indeed important ; but more important still is a catalogue of the vices that will keep or wrench him from the Lord. For this reason we shall in the following lines make a careful study of the *rāga* and *dvesha* (attraction and repulsion) emotions that are especially considered by the leading authorities to be impediments to *bhakti*.

To begin with, the aspirants to *bhakti* should control grief. It is one of those emotions which have a natural tendency to excess, and generally produce cumulative effects. Grief, says the *Varāha Purāṇam*, consumes the body, and destroys *buddhi*. Modesty, fortitude, *dharma*, prosperity, good

name, memory, policy—all *dharma*s, one by one, abandon the man stricken with grief.

The tongue must be controlled; especially, harsh and unkind words must never be used. 'The forest-tree struck by the arrow heals up, but the wound caused by cruel speech never heals. The archer's arrow, after it has been driven into the body, can be extracted therefrom; not so the arrow of speech which is imbedded in the heart. (*Bhîshma* in *Mahâbhâratam*, *Anus'âsana Parva*, Chap. 101).

Speaking ill of and otherwise defaming the character or actions of man or *deva* is treated by the *S'âstric* authorities as a vice of serious import, and hedged in with stern prohibitions. None should indulge in it, even if unconsciously, on pain of a fall.

*Kâma* (lust), *krodhâ* (wrath) and *lobhâ* (greed) should be abandoned. This trinity of passions constitutes the triple gate of hell.\* There resides in this deadly trio an unlimited potentiality for retrogression; they can in one single incarnation extinguish the human self, and degrade it to be imprisoned for indefinite periods in sub-human forms. The aspirant to *bhakti* must beware of them all, and shun them like the pestilence. Especially must he keep a wide-awake watch over his mind, and keep it from the insidious infection of greed. It is a hydra-headed monster, which imposes upon its victim by innumerable disguises; and when once it has subjugated his feeble mind, it throws off the disguise, sucks his blood dry, and leaves him a ghastly, demoralised, disorganised moral wreck.

There is a remarkably graphic description of this dread ally of *Kali* in the *Mahâbhâratam* (Chap. 158, *S'ânti Parva*) which space forbids us to quote in full. All who desire mental and moral tonic are earnestly requested to read and digest it. *Bhîshma* compares it to a dragon which opens its

\* *Bhagavadgîtâ*, XVI.

jaws wide and swallows all, and calls it the one source of all sin, of all transgression. To the prolific parentage of covetousness *Bhîshma* traces consecutively forty-four different varieties of sins, without exhausting the list of this accursed and despicable brood, for he subsequently mentions others more formidable still, which are in their turn generic sins containing within themselves the germs of an endless nefarious progeny.

*Mâtsaryya* (envy, spite) is another sin which is not less ruthless in its disruptive powers. *Vishnu* Himself in the *Varâha Purânam* (Chap. 148) testifies to its implacable virulence and emphatically proscribes it: "Envy is for the ruin of everything; envy destroys *dharma*. He who is possessed of envy never sees Me once."

The *Vrihannâradiya Purânam* (Chap. 32) has something fresh to say on these points :—

"Mental suffering has its roots in wrath; an instrument of life-evolution is wrath; a destroyer of *dharma* is wrath. Wherefore, let it be abandoned. Birth has its root in carnality; a cause of sin is carnality; a destroyer of reputation is carnality. Wherefore, let it be abandoned. Of all sufferings, envy is said to be the cause as well as an instrument of hell. Let this envy be abandoned."

Those who have made up their mind to dedicate themselves to the service of the Supreme (and the aspirant to *bhakti* belongs to this class), and in general those who desire happiness in this life and in the next, are recommended by *Bhîshma* (in *Anus'âsana Parva*, Chap. 13) strictly to abstain from ten specific sins. Of these, three belong to the body, three to the mind and four to speech. The body must never take life, nor commit theft, nor touch woman except one's lawful wife. The tongue must ever avoid all gossip and tattle, all harsh and unkind words, all slandering and tale-bearing and all untruthful words. The mind must not dwell on things that belong to others, must never think ill of others, nor disbelieve the *Vedas*.

Among what may be called individual vices, there is

perhaps none so pervasive and ineradicable, none so full of a subtle but deadly poison, as thirst for enjoyment (*āshā*, *trishnā*). In its origin it is an innocent enough thing, beginning generally as a mild and even reasonable hope or expectation, but presently it develops into a devouring passion. Of the infinity of wondrous *s'aktis* (forces) which play on the bosom of *Māyā*, when she indulges in her creation frolic, there is none so potent nor so dreadful as *āshā*. It is *insatiable*. Disappointment, failure, has more often than not a chastening effect on it, but every act of gratification adds an ever-increasing fierceness to its appetite. Says *Bhīshma* (*Anus'āsana* 4), hairs decay, and teeth decay, and eyes and ears decay when life decays, except thirst (*trishnā*) which alone does not decay. The *Vrihannāra-diya Purāṇam* repeats the same verse word for word excepting the last which it replaces by a telling substitute. It says, thirst alone grows young. Thirst grows young with every gratification and burns with a fiercer flame. The same authority continues, thirst is dreadful, invincible, and must be treated as an enemy. The wise man who desires permanent happiness must forsake it. With surpassing swiftness it destroys strength, energy, fame, knowledge, power, experience, lineage. The men who are the victims of thirst continue under an incurable delusion, ever inflamed with regrets, and are insensible to insult and humiliation. Loss of self-respect, loss of virility, of manhood; noble possessions, the result of ages of effort, reduced to blackened and desolate ruin in an incredibly short space of time by a single dreadful, consuming, passion. It builds a dense, hard, and impenetrable shell around self, within which it lies imprisoned, shut out from light as the larva in its cocoon. Of the many passions which imprison self in matter, there is none so persistent and pervasive and deadly in action as *trishnā* (thirst).

There is one other vice which deserves a special notice. Avarice, greed of money, the money-grubbing spirit, might

well have been included under the head "greed" or "thirst," but it is such a formidable and universal passion, and fosters so many other vices that it deserves a separate study. In the *Bhikshu Gītā* which occurs in the *Bhāgavatam*, *artha* (riches) is declared to be the foster-parent of fifteen different vices. It says :—

"Theft, injury, untruth, pride, lust, wrath, conceit, boastfulness, breach (with relatives and friends), enmity, distrust, spirit of rivalry, together with addiction to women, wine, and gambling—these are evils which have their roots in riches."

This compact and menacing array of attendant vices, which avarice marshals under its banner, constitutes such an eloquent commentary upon it that any further remarks would be perfectly superfluous. The temptations with which it plies the soul are so many and so powerful, the ease with which it demoralises and corrupts strong and virtuous minds is so well-known, that it is hardly necessary to warn the aspirant to *bhakti* to beware of its insidious suggestions. Nothing is morally so filthy, so revolting in some of its incidents, as avarice, which is a barbarous and *mean* vice.

Thus far we have been occupied in arranging and cataloguing what we might call personal sins and transgressions which require to be carefully eschewed. The *nishedha* (prohibitive) commandments in *bhakti* include two other sins of the gravest consequence, which may by contrast be styled communicable or contagious sins. The first relates to what may be called blasphemy (*nindā*) in any form against the Lord. Both blasphemy and the blasphemer must be shunned and fled from like the pestilence. In all the religions of the world blasphemy has been held up to execration, and the blasphemer proscribed as the scourge of society. Hinduism has not only denounced blasphemy and consigned it to perdition, but has gone a step further and treated it as a moral infection of a virulent type, and recommended an absolute segregation of the blasphemer. Says the *Bhāgavatam* (X. 74.)

"Also he who, on hearing blasphemy against the Lord or against His superior



relatives, does not walk away thence, falls low, having slipped from his meritorious actions."

The *Saura Purāṇam* speaks of it as one of those great transgressions, for which the *Sanātana Dharma* provides no atonement, because it is an enormity which atonement would fail to extinguish.

"For the man who once blasphemes *S'iva* the Supreme Ruler no purification whatever that is provided by *munis* is seen in *Purāṇas*."\*

It will be seen that in the second extract blasphemy is proclaimed to be such a black and malignant transgression that nothing, no atonement, can avail to avert its terrific recoil on the devoted head of the man who has invited his doom. And the first extract in clear and emphatic accents proclaims segregation to be the only effectual means of dealing with this scourge ; segregation alone can avail to counteract its spread and kill it off by starvation. Unhappily, in this age of rampant materialism, blasphemy has found a congenial soil in the land of the *Rishis*. The most atrocious calumnies against the cherished *Devas* are indulged in with impunity and without protest from the herd of bipeds who listen in silence. It is impossible to segregate blasphemy now. The poor aspirant to *bhakti* must give it a wide berth.

Nothing more humiliating and heart-rending can be imagined than that the ears of the *bhakta* should be assailed with blasphemy against the Adored One. In those cases where a man is not yet a *bhakta*, but aspires to be one, the proper and correct attitude, in the absence of the power to resist the blasphemer, is to flee from the blasphemy. There are two illustrious cases in the *S'āstras* exemplifying this attitude. The first relates to *Devi Uṃḍā*. She was engaged in *tapas* with a view to win the hand of *S'iva* as Her Husband, when *S'iva*, in

\* The Christian Bible also says that every sin shall be forgiven to men, except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit ; for that there is no forgiveness, either in this world or in the world to come. *Jt. Ed.*

order to try Her faith, assumed the form of a bent and decrepit *Brāhmaṇa*, and wishing to dissuade Her from Her vow, began at once a bold and ribald attack on Himself. *Uṃā* continued for some time to vindicate Him in eloquent and inspiring accents, but when She found that *S'iva's* attack on Himself increased in ribaldry as Her own vindication in ardour, She prepared with Her companion in attendance to leave that disreputable neighbourhood, polluted by blasphemy and continue Her *tapas* in another spot.

The hero of the second story is the celebrated *Rishi Upamanyu* who, when a little boy of five, made *tapas* to win the grace of *S'iva*. *S'iva* assumed the form of *Indra* and assailed him with temptations, but *Upamanyu* refused them all, and scornfully repudiated Him. At last the false *Indra* began to attack and abuse *S'iva*, when *Upamanyu*, the fiery *Brāhmaṇa* boy, unable to contain himself any longer, vowed that he would take the life of *Indra* first and then perish himself in the fire. In order to understand *Upamanyu's* vow it should be borne in mind that resistance to blasphemy and blasphemers is considered in Hindu *S'āstras* an act of piety as well as a sign of active *bhakti*.

There is another force of tremendous destructive power akin to blasphemy, which the *bhakta* must shun, if he has any regard for his future. The *abhakta*, as he is called, one who disbelieves and spurns *bhakti*, who boasts of his self-dependent virility, who votes a *bhakta* to be a namby-pamby sentimental baby, is a centre from whom perpetually oozes out an exhalation which is deadly to the tender shoot of faith. He carries about his person, about his atmosphere, virulent spiritual poison. Socially he may be a good enough man, affable and considerate; morally he may stand as high as others or even higher; but wherever he goes, he blows like the blast of a scorching simoom, and turns verdant oases into bleak and desolate wastes. The weak and little

aspirant to *bhakti* must especially beware of such men. They carry death, negation, scepticism, disruption, in their talk, movement, breath, mind, and spirit. In a few days or weeks they will infect with palsy the aspirations which have taken so many laborious years to build into shape. The infidel in *bhakti*, whether friend or acquaintance or neighbour or stranger, is a perpetual menace whom the *bhakta* must keep at a respectable distance.

We have now brought this long but most important review to a close. It will be seen that in it we have briefly surveyed one part—possibly more important than the others—of those preliminary conditions which must be fully complied with by those who have set their heart on *bhaktiyoga*. All *yoga*, whether *bhakti* or any other, commences and centres in the mind. Bondage or liberation has reference entirely to the mind. And so, *bhaktiyoga* must be commenced in a purified mind. In an impure mind, in which hosts of passions and vices are securely asleep or rising to the surface at odd intervals under the sluggish operation of normal *karma*, feeble and evanescent flashes of the *bhakti* emotion would be possible. On the shallower levels of the mind, in intervals of comparative lucidity and repose, an occasional gleam of *bhakti* would flash just as the lambent lightning plays on the edge of the light summer cloud. But in such a mind the *yoga* of *bhakti* cannot arise.

“Without *dharma* there is no *yoga*—this is what is said by those who know *yoga*.” (*Devi Purānam*).

An occasional and fitful coruscation of *bhakti* cannot unite the heart to the Beloved. *Yoga* arises in a purified mind, in a mind carefully and systematically prepared and weeded. As a text already quoted puts it with remorseless brevity, *bhakti* cannot arise without the extinction of sin. This is in some cases a slow, stagnant, long-drawn-out process, in which the events march with measured steps, and the

soul enjoys frequent spells of comparative repose. In others, it is a terribly swift and fierce process, in which *karma* unmasks its forces in serried battalions and delivers a succession of blows ghastly in their horror. This must be endured patiently and with resignation; for it is an essential and inevitable part of the mind-purification. There is one element of comfort in this dark tragedy of the soul, *viz.*, the more crushing and remorseless the blow, the swifter and more perfect is the scavenging of the mind. In this all-important preparatory work, it is the aspirant's highest duty to co-operate with all the earnestness and resourcefulness he can command. For, in the first place, the steadier the purpose, the nobler the aspiration, the swifter and surer is the resultant purification. But the aspirant must never forget that the readjustment of the *kārmic* balance which comes from nature, consequent upon a shifting of his spiritual centre of gravity, is confined to *prārabdha karma*. As regards *sanchita* and *kriyamāna karma* nature is not retributive, except in so far as she brings them up to the surface of life. Here again we see the profound import of concentrated one-pointedness, which determines the quantity and character of the latent evil *karma* thrown up on the surface of the mind, which in turn measures the degree and character of its purification. The purification of the mind from the pollution of *sanchita* and *kriyamāna* sin depends entirely on the aspirant's own initiative and personal effort. To cease to do evil actions, to cease to think evil thoughts, to cease to harbour evil passions, is a duty which demands the aspirant's immediate attention. He must cease from evil. No external agency—not even almighty nature—can turn a man from evil. Nature, now benign as the mother's caress, now remorseless as black destiny, may teach him the folly of evil. But the cessation from evil must come from the sanctuary of his own heart. Nobler than this there is nothing in this wide world. To

*resolve* to be freed from evil is divine ; to cease from evil is diviner ; to be a perpetual fount of benediction to all that lives is divinest. But the task is a hard though by no means an impossible one. On the dazzling canvas of that glorious production, the *Purāṇas*, the immortal Artist has portrayed both the correlated types of character. He shows us, on the one hand, men and women whose life is an impressive illustration of the highest virtues, and who, in the exalted purity, nobility, and innocence of their character, have stepped on the threshold of divinity. On the other hand, there are great and glorious ones, mighty in the possession of powers, bearing the burden of the world, who betray weaknesses which ally them to humanity. The aspirant must persevere, combine stern and unwavering resolution with infinite patience. And some day, from behind dark and lowering clouds, poised in dense and heavy masses in the sky, and charged with destructive hurricanes, the benignant star of *bhakti* will shine forth.

#### A PAURANIC STUDENT.

“I was caught in an April hailstorm this year while making my way homeward through some not very attractive fields. I kept my head down, and gathered my garments tightly around me as long as the squall lasted ; but when I reached the top of the little eminence which marked the last stage of my climb, and looked back and down upon the way I had come, I found those same fields draped in gorgeous hues, every twig and blade of grass a scintillating point of brilliancy. The evening sun was shining on the wet landscape, and a magnificent rainbow had been flung right across it. It was the same scene through which I had battled my way, but transfigured and viewed from above. And so it is with life. I do not think we are meant to understand any experience in its fulness until it is past ; I do not think we can completely enter into it till it becomes a memory.” — (Rev. R. J. Campbell, in the *Christian Commonwealth*.)

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE APOSTLE PAUL.

*( A paper read at the Fourth Annual Meeting of The I. T. League. )*

The Pauline writings are the earliest written authority we possess regarding the original teachings of the Christian Church. It is this fact which constitutes their chief feature of interest. Setting aside one school of Pauline criticism which adopts an entirely destructive position, there is a fair consensus of opinion regarding the Pauline authorship of at least five of the cardinal Epistles—1st and 2nd Corinthians, Romans, Galatians, and Philippians, which are extensive enough to contain Paul's Gospel, and are undoubtedly by his hand. It is impossible to enter into a discussion of this difficult subject. One thing, however, we may regard as certain—that the Epistles termed Pauline sufficiently represent authoritative teaching in the Christian Church to warrant us in regarding of secondary importance the hand through which they were written. They answer the question as to what were the definite bases of the Christian faith in its earliest days, and show us the outline around which later developments of Patristic doctrine took place.

A difficulty with many students lies in the composite nature of the teachings they contain. In the Epistles we find not one Paul, but many. There is the Pharisee, steeped in Rabbinical thought—clear, incisive, dogmatic, narrow in his very hatred of exclusiveness—never more Jewish than when he is denouncing the circumcision. There is the Gnostic, teaching what is certainly incipient Gnosticism in terms which are to a great extent those of older Pagan cults. There are traces not a few of Alexandrian philosophy, and a more than

bowing acquaintance with Philo and Stoicism. The Kabbala, too, has influenced many of his best known passages.

These different and seemingly contradictory elements, uniting together in one personality, and running through the Epistles like stripes of diverse colours, have led many not unnaturally to refer the different stripes to different dates, hands, and schools ; thus, we are told that the Alexandrianism of Col. i. could not be by the same hand as the Rabbinism of Gal. iv. But have we not often seen the mystic and the ecclesiastic, the dogmatist and the seer united in one personality ? Do we analyse, *e.g.*, Augustine into his twofold personality, and decide that each of the dual aspects is the work of a separate mind ? Is it not rather the sign-manual of greatness that it shall contain more aspects than its critics can reckon with ? Knowing this, we are not afraid to regard Pauline teaching as though the most mystical of his letters—Ephesians and Colossians—were from his mind if not from his pen, and so to class him among the great mystic philosophers whose influence has moulded all subsequent spiritual thought, and who live to-day by virtue of that insight which sees the truths that are true for all time.

There are certain doctrines in the realm of Christian dogmatics which are commonly regarded as essentially Pauline. We associate with his name a largely travestied teaching of salvation through the death of Christ, and of the efficacy of faith in contrast to works. This, in the mind of many, is the Pauline Gospel *par excellence*. But as a matter of fact his call was not to these things. Atonement, faith, election, predestination are all subsidiary to, though they enter into the great Mystery which he was called upon to reveal. In the truest sense St. Paul was an Epopot, if by this we mean one initiated into and the revealer of a mystery. He employs the term Mystery eighteen times, and on three occasions he defines it explicitly. The Mystery we discover is twofold ; it

is a universal truth applied to particular conditions. These *conditions* have for us an historical interest only ; they are not of our day, and are therefore vital only as we can see in them an indication of the working of Divine Purpose. The *universal truth* is, however, as much—nay, more—the essential truth of spiritual being to-day, as when Paul announced it to the Church at Ephesus 2,000 years ago.

What, then, does he say of his Mystery? We shall find one aspect of it in Eph. iii. 1-13. It is clearly stated to be the universality of the Gospel. The Gentiles are fellow-heirs in the promise made to Abraham.

But were this the whole of the ?Mystery, we should be inclined to give it but small personal heed. The exclusive notion of a chosen people forms no part of our present religious environment ; though many of us are still more Jew than Christian, we have mostly acquired a sense of universality in things spiritual which has penetrated our minds even when it fails to influence our conduct. St. Paul's Mystery would be obsolete if it stopped there. But it goes on to provide the universal ground for a particular truth. In Col. ii. 3 he hopes that the Laodiceans may know the Mystery of God—"even Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden." And again in the same Epistle he is even more explicit. The "mystery which hath been hid from the ages and the generations, but now hath been manifested to the Saints is Christ in you, the hope of glory whom we proclaim, admonishing every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man perfect in Christ." Here is the fact which explains the universality of the Gospel—a truth so great even to the Twelve, that St. Paul seems to look back to the time when it was announced as the time when it first became true. To him Christ was the whole of life, the reward of death, the revelation of the Gospel, the Lord of all things, the Master of his glad and willing bond-service. There



was nothing in any world for Paul but this one supreme, eternal fact of Being.

His Gospel, then, was Christ ; not so much statements about Christ ; still less forensic deductions concerning the work of Christ for men. These are present, but they are not the Gospel. They are perhaps fringes of the Mystery, but not the Mystery itself.

Let us enquire carefully concerning the nature of this Mystery which was to St. Paul the whole of the Gospel. Was his Christ the Nazarene personality of our Gospel records, with which Paul was certainly unacquainted in the form in which we have them now ? Was He an individual or a state, a power of divine energy within, or a universal presence without—or was the Pauline Christ each and all of these things according to the aspect from which we may elect to regard Him.

If we can conceive of a great range of individual being, a consciousness universally diffused, embracing all lower conditions ; a power energising in the hearts of men, seeking mightily to raise the individual life to the level of the cosmic ; a love which is ceaselessly transmuting sin by the forth-putting of its opposite, grace ; a presence never withdrawn, which forms the bulwark of the world, working without haste and without rest at the silent and mighty task of drawing all men—nay, all things—unto itself ; a being, in short, who is at once cosmos and man, salvation and saving energy, above limitations, above personality, and yet more intimate, more compassionate, more wise, more perfectly, in a word, *human* than personality has yet revealed itself to be—divine in that there is nothing in the worlds of manifested being that is not put under Him, human in that the whole record and gleaning of æons of evolution has been carried up into Him to be retained in fulness for ever—such a one is the Pauline Christ. Such a one is the mystery, to the revelation of which the Apostle's life had been given—Christ in Whom all the treasures of

wisdom and knowledge are hidden. That this state is cosmic and inclusive is shown by certain expressions which are continually in use throughout the Epistles—"in Christ," "in the Lord," "in Christ Jesus," "in Christ Jesus our Lord." St. Paul referred everything to the cosmic over-soul. Every detail of the Christian life is to be lived within the embraces of this larger life, which is yet so intimately one with the lower that the difference between them is not one of kind but of degree. God has brought all things to a head in Christ; He is thus the climax of a continuous development; He unites in His larger Being all lesser and imperfect states of being. Evolution in all its degrees and kingdoms meets in Him. He stands for the next step in development, or, to put it in Pauline phraseology, He is the New Creation—the divine opposite to Adam, who typified humanity subject to vanity, fallen from its pre-natal splendour into conditions of partial, hence illusory being.

Now the term "in Christ" covers, as I have said, the whole of the Christian life. Everything takes place within that over-consciousness, that divine matrix for the development of divine embryos. The expression "in Christ" occurs twenty-nine times in the Epistles; the expression "in Christ Jesus" occurs twenty-four times; "in the Lord," twenty-nine times; "in the Christ," four times; and that quaint expression, "in the Jesus," once.

A careful examination of the use of these terms convinces us that they are interchangeable. Paul says, for example: "Though there are ten thousand tutors in Christ, yet are there not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I begat you by the Gospel." And again: "We are one body in Christ"; and "Ye are all one man in Christ Jesus"; "Wherefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature"; and "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."

This indifferent use of the two expressions is suggestive of a great truth. The eternal Christ, the great cosmic Æon, known to every religion worthy of the name, existed before His manifestation in Jesus. In Jesus He came into visible expression partly because He is seeking such expression in every man that cometh into the world, and partly because the laws of God demand that such manifestation should at times be given in fulness. Shall we put it that the cosmic Christ became personified in Jesus? If so, then the Jesus personality—the pure Hebrew vehicle in which the Mystery abode—was eventually taken into the Fulness, expanding into That which had been from eternity His true and highest Self, as It is the true and highest Self of each of His brethren. This, we venture to think, is the true meaning of His glorification and ascension. It is the state of the human nature “taken into God.” We cannot even think the fringe of so great an extension of being. But it is vital to attempt to do so, because Paul tells us that we, as members of the same human family, have been taken into it too. “God *has* quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up with Him, and made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” And one day this fact, now true transcendently, will be true in actual experience. It is not difficult to sense the reason for this marvellous saying of the Apostle, because in the cosmic consciousness of one who has become Christ there is no separation from anything in a universe based on solidarity. What one does, all do in the One. Expand yourself into universal life and love and being, and you will find that I am somehow sharing that experience with you—nay, that you *cannot* become perfect without me. To be truly glorified, one dimly sees, requires the equal glorification of all. To the Christ-consciousness all men are Christs. This is surely the very essence of glorification; it certainly cannot exist short of that. The great thing is to enable that which

is true to the consciousness of the Head to become true to the consciousness of each of the members, for to be "raised with Christ" does not mean that each one is not also to attain in and for himself the resurrection from the dead. St. Paul still "pressed towards the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus," although he confessed that in Him he was already complete, in Him he had already risen.

Thus Christ, the eternal cosmic Word in Whom we have been created and pre-destined to glory, and Christ Jesus, that Word enriched by the expanded consciousness of a perfect member of the race, are practically inseverable.

But we would like to point out, for the sake of helping to remove a difficulty that exists for many, that the Pauline Christ is not Jesus as He is recorded in our Gospels, the Word under limitation, the Word stooping to humiliation in the Nazarene peasant. He is rather the Nazarene peasant raised to His highest Power, Jesus ascended into Christ Jesus, the vehicle become identified with the Fulness. Of that wondrous ascended and glorified Consciousness our records give no detail. They stop short at the Apotheosis, when the human vehicle of the Christ had been transmuted into the Body of Glory, too fine, too spiritual, too all-embracing for further contact with the physical world. There is little evidence to show that Paul knew much about the details of the life of Jesus before His glorification ; he knew Jesus ascended into Christ, and the marvel of that Mystery wiped out all lesser knowledge.

To study the nature of this mighty over-consciousness of the Christ is possible, of course, only from the standpoint of our relation thereto. What it is in itself we cannot yet know ; what we are to it we have been told more explicitly. And the study is one which may well call for our highest effort, because the cosmic Christ which was the Self of Jesus, and with Whom He was ultimately united in an indissoluble identity, is also the Self of each one of us. In Christ Jesus we *are*

united with that Self, we *are* a new creature, we *have* passed out of the Adam-state of which the keynote is the dislocation of the nature, and have entered into the state of heavenliness of which the keynote is rightness. At present this blessing is ours, through and in Him ; we are sharing a condition to which individually we have not yet attained. But the promise of the Gospel is that we *shall* attain. To this we are predestined. This is the "eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" ; this the state of the full-grown man, the "measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Therefore it behoves us to study as deeply as we may the characteristics of that state as revealed by the intimate vision of the Apostle.

Christ, the cosmic consciousness, the over-soul of the race, is the reconciler of the discords of humanity. In His state all that is evil flees away and is no more. He literally "puts away sin" by bringing the opposite poles of human nature into at-one-ment or reconciliation. He is the power of God, making all things possible that are necessary to the Christian life. He is the inner light, and the energising, resurrecting power at the heart, lifting man out of darkness into His marvellous light. He is the head of a spiritual body for the indwelling of God. In Him all differences of race and creed are abolished, humanity is "one new man." He completes all previous processes of development. His glorification or ascension was that He might fill or fulfil (the word has the double meaning) all things ; hence all things contain His energising life, poured out on all the planes, sustaining, controlling, preserving, recreating. By filling all things He thus completes or fulfils all things. He is, in a word, the end of being. But chiefly His work is to build a body for the divine indwelling. God created man, but He does not yet possess him. He will do that only when a vehicle is prepared which He can fitly and fully indwell.

Now Christ is God's heritage, and we in Him, the Over-Man, are also "made a heritage." We are heirs of God's fulness, but wonderfully true is the converse that He is heir to our perfection. He needs us. We are His *klerôsis*, or His portion. The Apostle is using Jewish conceptions, and for us at the present day they may seem inapplicable, yet a closer insight may reveal truth even behind the wall of national prejudice. Israel was the "lot" or "portion" of Jehovah, an element in the human race which He had specialised to be, in a very peculiar sense, His own. But Israel, viewed mystically, stood for spiritual humanity. St. Paul is careful to distinguish between spiritual Israel, and those who were of the seed of Abraham after the flesh. Spiritual Israel thus becomes a microcosm of humanity, and we sense in this doctrine the vital truth that the "calling" of the human race is unto no less an honour than that of being possessed by God in a sense in which He does not possess the lower orders of Nature. If He is our heritage—a possession which is ours by right of royal kinship,—we, too, are His. He claims us for His use, His enrichment, His means of self-realisation. It is a great thought, this mutual interdependence of God and His self-expressions, and I doubt if Christianity has any higher work than to render its disciples worthy of the "high calling" to which they have been born. For if God is to enter fully into His heritage, we must be specially prepared for His indwelling, hence the Apostle's three great metaphors of the Christian community, the House, the Temple, and the Body. Each of these conveys the same idea—that of a vehicle for use—but the use is to be in three degrees. The House represents a more general sense of divine possession. It is possession in its outermost degree. In the metaphor of the Temple we have the conception of a house specially prepared, and adapted to holy use. All houses are not temples. In the Temple God reveals Himself with a degree

of intimacy, or sanctity, which is peculiar. Still the relationship is external, the metaphor drawn from the inorganic world. It is in the last and highest degree of the divine possession that we are brought into another order, the order of *life*. The Temple, however sacred, has to become the Body, ere the climax of divine indwelling can be reached. We know to-day far more than St. Paul presumably knew concerning the composition of organic structures, yet the fuller our knowledge of the wonderful reciprocity and interdependence between organ and function, life and matter, only renders this metaphor of his the more exact, the more appropriate as an illustration of the working of God in vehicles which are in a literal sense *functions of Himself*. We do not wish to confine our conception of the body to the physical instrument ; there are natural bodies and spiritual bodies ; we believe, however, that the need of the spirit for a body will persist as long as the spirit seeks self-expression,—as long, in short, as there is manifestation on any plane of the Divine Mind. If this be true, the force of the idea that God is preparing the human race as His inheritance comes strongly home. We see why we have come into being—to satisfy a need which is one of the essentials of the Divine Nature. To embody God, as Jesus embodied Him when He said “The Father in Me, He doeth the works,” this is the essence of Christianity as it is set forth in the writings of the greatest of the Apostles, and although he gave that essence a colouring peculiar to his time, our task is to penetrate beneath the form, and find the living truth which is as much alive to-day as when the first of his immortal letters was penned.

C. E. WOODS.

## THE PURSUIT OF MYSTIC RESEARCH.

Owing to the fact that most institutions which deal with Occultism and religious movements have a tendency to crystallise into set forms of activity not originally characteristic of them, and to become the expositors of personal aims which have nothing to do with their principles, it happens not infrequently that there emanate from them other separate activities, either in pursuit of the original programme, or as new departures. History shows how uniform has been this result, which has led to the formation of sects on the one hand, and independent research by individuals on the other, in every form and variety. Modern movements, whatever their pretensions, cannot look to have any other results than previous ones have shown ; and hence there is nothing abnormal in these subordinate segregations.

One such group has been started in New Zealand, under the name of the Group for the Pursuit of Mystic Research ; its programme is the interpretation of natural phenomena in the light of Mysticism, and general investigation into the domains of the occult and mysterious. Instituted by certain old students of the *Secret Doctrine* and similar works, supplemented by general knowledge, it proposes to carry out the evolution of the faculties latent in man among other things ; and by aid of the light gathered in the pursuit of its general work, to add its *quota* to all true knowledge as far as may be. Certain of its students have become possessed of some *data* which seem to add to the lucidity of understanding sought in its particular studies ; and these have been made available for the explanation of things hitherto involved in more obscurity than they would otherwise be.



As it seems to the founders of this little activity that the followers of modern movements of a spiritual tendency have rather taken the revelations of their founders for granted, than made them the subject of enquiry and proof, so the present unpretentious effort will take as much as may be the opposite course ; it will enquire and examine, but suspend acceptance or judgment until enlightened by its researches. In the meantime it makes every use of all previous works and the philosophies they expound ; and will endeavour as much as possible not to take up any cut-and-dried ground or line of enquiry ; so that each student may be at liberty to add whatever may be found from every source. In this it holds a common platform with prominent modern movements ; but it accepts no special revelations or teachings as the ultimate reference, while making all possible use of them as sources of enlightenment. It opposes no one, nor seeks to remain a separate organisation with any special aims more than the above may indicate ; but it leans equally towards all, while not exactly bound to the programme of any. Its work may prove lasting or otherwise, and its existence may prove temporary or permanent, as its conduct and results may prove to be true and real. Its students hold that though Truth may be obscured, it cannot be hidden finally ; and, on the other hand, that what is false, however it may be supported, is only of temporary prominence, and contains the seeds of its own destruction.

Thus the Group for the Pursuit of Mystic Research is not to be looked upon as the foundation of a new Society, but merely as a subsidiary, if independent, activity of those already in existence. As such, some of its members now contribute a paper to the *Pilgrim* ; which, if it shall prove acceptable to the readers of that publication, will be followed by others, as occasion may offer. Groups may be formed anywhere and by anyone ; there are no officers but a Secretary,

and the President for the time being is anyone who may be occupying the chair at its meetings. These have no regular programme; but members contribute papers for discussion, and the subject for the evening's work may be anything connected with Mysticism. From time to time one or other of the students draw up papers which are multiplexed and distributed at cost of production; the subscription has only rent and small charges to meet, and is so much per evening, as may be decided by each Group, but there is no common centre for financial procedure, and no balance sheets, *etc.*, unless any Group may draw up its own for the general satisfaction. Thus each Group is entirely free to follow its own lines, and is indebted to nobody for any special light or leading, nor is it the expression of any personalities or their particular teachings, nor for the financial benefit of anyone.

It will be to the interest of the different groups to correspond and exchange papers; because the wider the range of intelligence included, the better and the more will be the results. But, above all, its members must seek to avoid crystallising into any groove, or becoming the channels of only some special teachings. As long as they keep clear of such difficulties, progress will be made; as soon as such limitations become apparent, further disintegrations will follow, and the purpose of the original programme will be lost sight of.

Groups may be attached to recognised bodies as subsidiary activities, or they may be entirely independent; that depends upon their constituents, and their needs, idiosyncrasies, or lines of enquiry.

#### NOTES ON MYSTIC STUDY.

The first great principle to be recognised in attempting any mystic study is that everything that is seen is in a manner the reflection of the unseen—of the invisible world which lies

behind the visible ; and that it is this invisible world that is the reality, and the cause of all that is seen to exist around us. In speaking of the reality, we do not use this term as referring to the One Reality at the back of all manifestation, which is indeed unattainable and inconceivable to finite minds, being itself infinite ; but rather as denoting that which in our conceptions lies immediately behind those things which we see. The term *real*, like so many others, must be regarded not as meaning something final and definite, but rather as a relative term, which will therefore be applied somewhat differently at different stages of our evolution ; what now appears to us to be real being recognised later on to be unreal and evanescent. In one aspect evolution would seem to consist of this gradual recognition of a higher and higher reality—the reality in each case being the highest we are at present able to conceive, and ever leading us one step nearer to the Great Reality beyond. The same principle may be applied to the seen and the unseen ; there are many phases or degrees of the unseen, and as man's inner perception develops, he begins to perceive the lower degrees, and that which was once to him the unseen becomes the seen. It is said that the images of all that has been and of much that is yet to be are impressed upon the ether (*S. D. I, 462 o.e.*) ; this is one of the lowest phases of the unseen, and man may perhaps touch upon some of these lower degrees even now in the dream-state.

There have been and are those amongst scientists who have a dim perception of the realities lying beyond the physical phenomena, and who recognise that the causes of all we see lie in those unseen realities ; but it is the mystic alone who knows that it is the unseen which actually *is*, and that the seen is only its reflection, or partial presentment. It is the mystic also who possesses the key to the understanding of the relations between the seen and unseen ; every action in the external world corresponding to something in the internal ;

being in fact merely the physical manifestation of some happening upon the higher planes, and the actions of men the expression in concrete form of what already *is* in the Eternal. This is shown in the *Bhagavadgîtâ*, where *S'rî Krishna*, in exhorting *Arjuna* to play his part in the great battle, even though he shrinks from attacking the foes who were once his friends, says :—

“ By Me they are already overcome,  
Be thou the outward cause, left-handed one.”

St. Paul also speaks of the things of this earth being “the patterns of things in the heavens” ; and the doctrine of correspondences is one of the main teachings of Swedenborg, though he gives an artificial and not the true Hermetic presentment of it. These men were all mystics ; for the mystic is one who is able to learn of the hidden things through those that are seen—one who is not content with the study of the outward form, but who sees and knows something of the spirit within—of the truth symbolised thereby.

The question then arises, how is this higher knowledge gained, and in what way do the methods of the mystic differ from those of the modern scientists ? This question may be considered from a higher or from a lower standpoint—from that of our own individual life, that is, from a personal standpoint, or from that of universal principles. And here we may notice in passing, that it is from the personal standpoint that everything is first considered by us ; personal contact with things around us being our first experience with regard to them ; afterwards, as our perception widens, we see them from a higher viewpoint, which rises constantly as our evolution proceeds. Looking at this question, then, from the side of personal material existence, and of the ordinary methods of study, those of the scientist and those of the mystic may be indicated by the well-known terms, the inductive and the deductive. The scientific method is the former, the induc-

tive, whereby the facts of existence and of nature are observed, and certain principles evolved in accordance with them; whereas the mystic begins with the recognition of universal principles, and studies the facts observed by him in their light; while at the same time applying every means for the interpretation of external nature, and the discovery of its underlying truths, as checks upon his own conclusions. So both inductive and deductive methods are tested and proved by each other, and their results must agree. But in this way the mystic possesses a much wider field of observation, and study; he is able to trace the operation of certain principles in every realm of life, both spiritual and material; while the researches of the scientist are confined to the far more limited sphere of his own immediate experience. Illustrations of this may be found by examining the different applications of some of the well-known laws of nature, as made by the scientist and the mystic. Take, for example, the Law of Periodicity, and that which follows naturally from it, the Law of Cycles; these laws are generally recognised as working in the common everyday occurrences of normal life, such as the succession of day and night and of the seasons, the circulation of the blood, the changes of the tides, and various astronomical cycles, all of which belong to the physical plane. The mystic has taken these same laws, and raised them right above physical operations, showing their corresponding causes to be at work also in the spiritual world, even in its highest phases, so far as they can be known by man. Thus, in applying the Periodic Law to the hidden side of things, the mystic arrived at the Eastern Theory of Emanation and Absorption as their grand cosmic total, with the consequent alternate cycles of activity and inactivity, of manifestation and of rest, which theory he sees to be the very foundation of all manifestation. And the correspondences of this Great Breath are traceable from its

immense sweep, down to the least possible wave and vibration ; one uniform law dominating and explaining them all.

In the same way he sees the Law of Cycles as regulating not only the whole history of one globe, the rise and fall of nations, races, and empires, but also the appearance and disappearance of universes, the birth and destruction of all cosmic systems. The Undulatory Theory of the propagation of force, and the existence of the ether of space, are also examples of the same thing ; these were only admitted by science when they became necessary to explain physical phenomena ; yet they are known to have been very ancient teachings amongst occultists.

If we come to enquire into the reason of this difference of view, we shall find that it is connected with some of the fundamental principles of the Universe, and is based upon the very nature of consciousness. Consciousness is *one*, but it varies very greatly in its manifestation, as is clearly shown in many passages in the *Secret Doctrine*. It is there stated that mind is resolvable into varying states of consciousness (I, 2),\* “differing in degree, but the same in kind” (I, 166), and that “everything in the Universe is endowed with a consciousness of its own kind, and on its own plane of perception” (I, 274). Man “is endowed with the highest consciousness on this earth,” and it is because of this that he can come more closely into touch with the Infinite Spirit than any lower form of existence is able to do (III, 518).

The human consciousness is therefore only one stage or degree—the one with which we are all familiar ; we do not understand that of the lower kingdoms, but it by no means follows that they have none ; and in the same way we cannot yet realise that which belongs to the higher planes, though the time will come when that will be revealed to us ; for every individual knows only the consciousness of that

\* The references throughout are to the old edition of the *Secret Doctrine*. [*Jt. Ed.*]

plane upon which his own is working. Again, there is an intimate connection between consciousness and matter ; they are indeed inseparable, each being dependent upon the other for manifestation (I, 15). This being so, it is obvious that there must be as many degrees or states of consciousness as there are conditions of matter. So we read also that "the capacity of perception exists in seven different aspects, corresponding to the seven conditions of matter, and this sevenfold capacity of perception necessitates a corresponding sevenfold consciousness." (II, 599, 597, notes).

These considerations should help us to understand why the mystic can perceive things hidden from the consciousness of the ordinary man. There is a consciousness in spirit as well as in matter ; and "Real life is in the spiritual consciousness of that life, in a conscious existence in spirit, not matter" (III, 512); and man must awaken the highest states of consciousness, and must know something of this existence in spirit, before he can understand the things pertaining to the higher planes (I, 199). So we ever find our enquiries reverting to Madame Blavatsky's monumental work, which is written not for any special time, but for all times ; and it is a fallacy to suppose that it was merely written to suit the students of some twenty years back, while it is no longer suitable, as certain writers would have us believe. Students should beware of any subtle attempt to obscure this great work and relegate it to the background, in order that others of much less value may be brought into prominence.

We have already seen that there is an unseen world behind this visible world which surrounds us and in which our everyday consciousness works. The same laws are operative in this unseen world as in the visible, but their working is seen by the student only on that plane upon which his own consciousness is evolved and functions. Hence the scientist sees only their operation in concrete forms while the mystic



perceives the universal law acting upon every plane. For the perception and realisation of this unseen world, it seems obvious that another form or degree of consciousness must come into play ; that, as there is a physical consciousness which perceives and knows physical things, so there must be a spiritual consciousness for the apprehension of spiritual things ; that, as the external perception corresponds to the outward aspect of things, so, corresponding to the interior aspect, is an inner sight, which is neither an abnormal power, nor an additional sense, but which can yet be cultivated by the practice of studying the inner side of things. It is by this inner perception that the mystic sees what is hidden from the ordinary man ; so the *Bhagavadgītā* (II, 69) says :—“ That which is the night of all beings, for the disciplined man is the time of waking ; ” in other words, that which is subjective to the ordinary man is objective to the mystic. This twofold consciousness is otherwise expressed as an outward or personal and an inward or individual man, the unification or mutual recognition of these two being the aim of our present evolution, and capable of attainment at least in part during our life in the physical body.

These teachings as to all natural phenomena being the symbols of occult things, and of the existence of an inner faculty whereby spiritual perception may be gained, have been characteristic of all mystic societies in all ages, and formed part of the teaching of the many mystic sects which kept alive the knowledge of spiritual truth during the centuries of materialism which followed the Reformation, culminating in the wave of materialistic tendency during the last fifty years. So Louis Claude de St. Martin, a mystic of the 18th century, says :—

“My task in this world has been to lead the mind of man by a natural path to the supernatural [i.e. supernormal] things which of right belong to him, but of which he has lost all conception, in part by his degradation, in part by the frequently false instruction of his teachers. This task.....is so vast and so certain,



that I must be deeply grateful to [the higher powers] for having charged me therewith ; it is a task which no one has [in this manner] exercised heretofore, because those who have instructed and still instruct us daily expect in doing so either blind submission, or retail only miraculous stories." (See A. E. Waite's work on St. Martin, pp. 82, 83).

This power of perceiving the inner side of things, of which we have been speaking, would appear to be a faculty of the Higher Ego, spiritual rather than psychic. There have indeed been many mystics who possessed psychic powers in greater or less degree ; but it is not these powers which have enabled them to gain such clear perception of truth, nor does their possession constitute any claim to the attainment of true mysticism. Psychic powers may be said to pertain to the *soul*, this inner perception is of the *spirit* ; it is the power of reflecting upon a lower plane the things belonging to a higher.

The true mystic is in reality a medium through whom those Higher Beings who have attained to fuller spiritual life, and have passed beyond the need of earthly existence—those who are called Masters and by many other names—may work upon and impress the minds of students and disciples who are striving to follow in their steps, and through them may illuminate as far as possible all receptive minds that can respond to their influence, even as the sun illuminates the mountain-tops at dawn. These Great Ones have themselves been mystic students during their lives upon earth, and they now live and work upon the higher planes, whence their influence is far more potent than would be the case were they to work in a physical vehicle. There are many grades of such Beings, who are in touch with humanity ; and to some of the lower orders is entrusted the work of aiding the evolution of human faculty ; in this work there is the double object of helping on the individual, and also of forming thereby a more effective channel of communication with humanity as a whole. It must be remembered that the

higher spiritual truths can never be fully revealed upon a lower plane, because, however highly evolved may be the power which is working above, it is limited in its expression in concrete form by the capacity of the vehicle through which the expression comes. It should therefore be the aim of the mystic student to become as perfect a medium as possible for the Master's thought, that he may reflect more and more of the Divine Light transmitted through Him.

A writer in the *Christian Commonwealth* has described the true mystic in the following words :—

“Wherever the spirit of God blazes a trail through the jungle of the heart, we have a mystic and a maker of mystics. He is more than a mere revealer of the new quality of life which he has tasted; he is its imparter and communicator. He casts fire upon the earth. He evokes and even creates the experience of which he is a thrilling, youth-giving centre. He comes that we may have life, and have it more abundantly. He is the accumulator of a divine and fertilising energy which he discharges upon others, making them sharers of his own transcendent dower. God is no longer a logical inference for the reason, or an absentee law-giver for the will, but an illuminating Presence in the intellect, a resident Judge and an ennobling Power in the conscience, and above all, a lyrical and ecstatic Love filling and overflowing the soul, as with strains of Paradise.”

But the Master can only thus influence those who are sufficiently in accord with Himself to receive that influence, and who have trained themselves to respond to it; to all such a wide field of knowledge opens up, and higher faculties are developed within them whereby they may make this knowledge their own.

They attain to that state of intelligence which is defined in the *Secret Doctrine* as “intuition—the clear vision,” as distinguished from “reason which oscillates between right and wrong.” (III, 559). They are then able to pass on the knowledge they have gained to others less advanced in the mystic way; or, more correctly speaking, they can point out to others the steps which they must take in order to develop within themselves the same faculty of perceiving the higher spiritual truth. For it is this development of faculty which

is the aim of all mystic training rather than the mere gaining of information upon any subject, to however high and spiritual a plane it may relate. And this development is gained in a twofold way ; there is the receptivity which permits the influx of spiritual power, and there is the ever watchful study and comparison of the Divine Book of Nature lying always open before us, whereby is tested the verity of all that comes into the consciousness ; and we make it our own instead of merely a thing accepted on faith and taught as belief without power of proof or certitude of fact. The higher works always in harmony with the lower for the manifestation of truth, and to discard either for the other is to land in illusion, and not in Reality.

We might conceive of the different grades of mystic students as a ladder upon each rung of which some are standing, each one being able to help those on the rung immediately below him, while himself receiving help from those above ; the light which shines at the top of the ladder being thus reflected downwards in varying degrees of intensity, according to the earnestness and devotion of those through whom it comes, and the plane of consciousness to which evolution may have raised them.

We see, then, that Mystic Study has for its object not merely the individual progress of the student, but that by it he may become a more perfect medium for the manifestation of fuller spiritual light, and so may be of greater service in the gradual evolution of the race. This thought, if fully realised, must surely act as an incentive to each one to make the very best of all his opportunities, and to such a one the question of deepest interest will be :—What are the first steps upon this Way of Attainment ? The consideration of this question will form the subject of our next paper.

SOME STUDENTS OF MYSTIC RESEARCH.

## CONCEPTS OF THEOSOPHY.

### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF NEGATION.

*(Concluded from p. 219.)*

We have seen how in the concepts of the ordinary man of this world there is the persistence of the concrete many presented to him by the worlds within and without. Hence knowledge is to him a mere correlation of these *quasi*-independent units of perceptual and conceptual life, strung together by the vague notion of an I, emerging from somewhere, and cognised as a stable unit in the midst thereof. Not only is there no permanent relation between these units ; but what is more, the place of the I in the midst of the display of outer forces is purely accidental. True, science seeks to collate these units and reduce them into semi-universal laws and principles ; but this reduction has nothing integrally to do with the sense of I in us, and has no bearing on its nature and destiny. Further, the laws thus discovered do not really reduce these divergent units, or merge their differences into an all-comprehensive and all-embracing unity, but merely explain the accidental or phenomenal relation between them. The sense of reality still clings to the element of all-inclusive individuality in these units. The mysterious power of producing organic effects which resides in a particular kind of bacillus is thus seen as the illustration of its separative unique nature ; and the discovery of these mysterious modes of relation therefore fails to lead us into the I in us and thence to the Self. For, says the *Bhagavadgîtâ* (IV, 34, 35), that alone is knowledge, the truly

knowable, "which seeth the infinite multiplicity of beings reduced without a residue (*as'eshāni*) into the *A'tman* and thence into Me."

Let us see if we advance any further towards this one trend of all knowledge—the reduction of the many into the I, and thence into the Self—by means of the intervention of the finer *tattvas* or states of matter, the finer and more glorified bodies of man, and the hierarchies of cosmic beings and powers, which the official Theosophy of the present day places before us for our acceptance. True, we no longer attribute things to chance and to the caprices of Nature, we have learned to prate about *karma*, and we try to see everything as the illustration of that mysterious power rough-hewing our individual life. But do we see or arrive at any principle, whereby the gulf between the I and the units of the conscious self is bridged? We dimly feel the presence of a larger power, but we do not see the power to be of ourselves, and not an extraneous agency under the supervision of a mysterious set of beings called the Lords of *Karma*. Then again, we speak of higher *tattvas*, but these *tattvas*, as explained by the modern exponents of Theosophy, are merely states of matter not essentially connected with or related to the I in us, nor to the one Self which is our goal. My friend at my side reminds me of "*Fohat* digging holes in Space," and says that there is a mention of the energy of the Supreme Self in the Theosophic expositions of the *tattvas*. But even the intervention of *Fohat* and other terms of cosmic import has no bearing on the I in me. I may label and ticket every cosmic power, and know exactly its laws and behaviour; but does that help me to reduce into the I in me the sense of the outer reality—the sense of the apparent many outside the consciousness? It has become now the correct thing to speak of the Masters and even of *Avatāras* as if they were common-place and every-day experiences of our lives; and we think one day of wrenching from

the Occult Brotherhood the closely guarded secrets of Nature. But even here the concept of the Master or *Avatāra* as placed before us for our acceptance does not help to reduce the outer many into the Self. The Masters may be the ideal to which the individual Theosophist seeks to aspire, but it is still the ideal individual as separated from the universal unity of the Self. It is the end and consummation, as it were, of the feeling of the persistence of the individual which is at present our motive power, and not the Self into which individuals enter, losing their name and form, like unto the ocean with infinity of rivers losing themselves in its transcendent being. The Master, as portrayed by the modern exponents of Theosophy, is as much a separated being as ourselves, though wielding mysterious powers, whereby he could dominate and bring to his own use the forces of Nature; and the *moksha* attainable is like a temporary opium-dream, delicious for the moment, but sure to be disturbed when another manifestation takes place of a higher universe. You can no more, with the help of these outer things, reduce the many into yourself, than you can realise the true import of life, even if you can successfully, with the help of suitable apparatus, illustrate the working of consciousness in plants. So *Light on the Path* very aptly says "Live in the Eternal; for nothing which is embodied, nothing which is conscious of separation, can help you."

This at once gives us the keynote as to the significance of the process of reduction hinted at by the Hindu Scriptures—the Psychology of Negation. It is not reduction by merely positing a universal law or principle as governing your objects. You must see in that law a universality of being which is of the I of you. Thus, while the discovery of the universal laws of heat has not succeeded in bridging the gulf between consciousness and matter, the *yogī*, on the other hand, by realising that even heat is but an expression of his own life and not a property of matter, can produce phenomena of heat.

without the intervention of any material apparatus or vehicle. It is only when you can negate outer being in antithesis to the I-consciousness, it is only when you see the many as the expression of that divine power which is the I in you, and not an external agency wooed into activity by suitable devices, that you have really begun learning the alphabet of that true science of the Self, in which everything, from the tiniest flower that blows to the most exalted *Dhyân-Chohan*, speaks to you no longer in the language of separateness, but in the language of the true unity and transcendence of the Self. It is not enough to develop astral, mental, and even higher vision, in which there is still the play of the separated life, it is not enough to be able to trace any particular separate thing into the *akâs'ic* plane and to read back individual lives in the past. For here is no true reduction of the outer many into the One, for everything still speaks to us in the language of separate uniqueness, which is *avidyâ*. Instead of thinking in the terms of trees, dogs, men, and women, you may have learned to think in the terms of *pitris*, reincarnating egos, and so forth, but still you are in the domains of the multicoloured *Mâyâ* and illusion, and nothing which is embodied, nothing which is out of the eternal can really help you.

The negation of the many, of the particular, of the embodied—the realisation that everything particular, everything embodied, is but the dim coruscation of the supernal radiance of the One Life—is therefore the only one principle by which the Self can be reached. In the *Bhâgavatam* we read of the *Gopîs*, thus transfigured by the love of the eternal Self, roaming through the forests of *Brindâbana* in search of the Lord, who had playfully disappeared from their midst, embracing trees and stones, but feeling no longer any sense of their individual being as trees and stones, but, on the contrary, getting from such contacts a revival of the mystic touch of the Self. Yet they were not hypnotised persons, as some

would fain explain, for they were in conscious possession of the senses, the mind, and the *buddhi*. The contact of a tree no longer awakened in their mind the idea of a specific tree or of the genus tree, nor of the elemental kingdom. There was physical contact in physical consciousness ; yet, due to the strange alchemy of the Self, and the transfigurement which an intense yearning after the Eternal produces, purifying the body, the senses, and so forth, of all individual tinge and colouring, the very senses and the mind, instead of taking them away from the Self, as with our enthusiastic *yogî* brothers, served, on the contrary, to indicate the very Self which was pulsating through their heart. The essential point of the Psychology of Negation is thus the absolute reduction of the outer many into the Self without any residue, and this is very clearly indicated in the story of *Brahmâ* stealing the cows of the Divine Actor. There we find the so-called occult view, which now goes under the name of Theosophy, clearly indicated by the cogitations of *Bâladeva*, who knew the cow-herds to be individual cosmic *Devas*, and the cows to be individual *Rishis*. Being the Lord of *ahañkâra*, he was content to see things in terms of and reduced to *ahañkâra*, and he naturally read into the drama played by the Lord the mysterious persistence of the individual. But when the spiritual sight, the truly spiritual vision, was open to *Brahmâ*, He saw not only that these cow-herds and the cows were each of them verily the Lord himself, but that even the characteristic points of difference in their dress, form, figure, in their sticks, horns, nay, even in the individual ornaments on their bodies, no longer bespoke the language of separateness, however exalted and high, but that each and every one of them became reduced into the one Self: This is the absolute reduction of everything individual, of everything separate, the reduction without a residue of which the *Bhagavadgîtâ* speaks, and of which the great Lord of *yoga* and Divine Wisdom, *S'añkarâchârya*, spoke



in the *Māndukya Upanishad* as quoted before. This is the reduction of the four stages of *jāgrata*, *svapna*, *sushupti*, and *turīya*, regarded no longer as the four feet of the cow. It is the kind of reduction operating in a man desirous of having a gallon of water and measuring the same with a pint-measure. He may pour out one pint after another and count the number, but each measure is to him not an independent something isolated and separated, but *a step towards the unity of the gallon* which he seeks, and absolutely merging into that unity. Each individual measure is but a process in the full realisation of the unity of the gallon, and has no individual value outside the same. It is also illustrated by the example often quoted in the *S'āstras* of individual dainty morsels of food, each producing the sense of the satisfaction of pleasure, and yet absolutely merging without any residue into that quiet, massive, and we may say static, sense of *ānanda*, which a good dinner gives.

The above will bring out the essential point in this Psychology of Negation, which, as we have tried to show, is the one language of the *S'āstras*, the one device by which the outer and the limited shows forth the Self. It is only when the heart longs after the supernal unity and majesty of the Self as *I's'vara*, as *Paramātmān*, or as *Brahman*, it is only when the soul of man thirsts after God, and longs for Him ; when, tired and perplexed with the sense of multiplicity and many-ness, his heart longs after that unity which nothing in manifestation nor anything out of manifestation can disturb ; when he steadily purifies the senses and the mind, and trains them to indicate no longer the individual Self in him, but the one universal Self, yet transcendent and ever beyond the limited ; when, dominated by the sense of unity, he deliberately surrenders all separative *dharma*s—however high and howsoever masked they may be ;—it is only then that the Fourth Life Wave of the *Gurudeva* comes unto him, and for the first time

in his phenomenal life indicates a supernal unity of consciousness and bliss hitherto undreamed of in the highest flight of his imagination. It is like the first perception of the fourth dimension of space, a perception which in one single act manifests a condition of things which he could not have realised by anything done to his three-dimensional conception. It is a new language, which, though illustrating and containing within itself the lower three-dimensional language, is yet incapable of production by any manipulation or rearrangement of the three-dimensional concepts. The disciple longs to know the Self, and the *Guru* takes a lump of salt and places it in a pot of water. The salt is dissolved in the waters of life, and the disciple tastes of it from the top, the bottom, and the middle, and finds it saltish. The unique salt of life is apparently lost out of sight, but is yet present everywhere; the *Guru* says "Thou art that, O *Shetaketu*" and the unity of the Self is brought home in one single act into the heart of the disciple. One wonders at the absolute simplicity of this experiment and instruction; the *Guru* pours out his heart, in which the Lord is ever seated, as it were, in love ineffable, into the heart of the purified disciple; and the loving heart of the latter catches the language which at once reveals to him the mystery and the majesty of the Self. There is no laborious conquering of plane after plane of manifestation, but, as it were, by a single magic touch of love, by one effort of the heart, the I in the disciple all of a sudden becomes transfigured into the likeness of that One ever-present Life and Light, which radiates through everything phenomenal.

But so long as there is in the heart of the disciple the least tinge of embodied and separated life, so long as he is not prepared to surrender everything he *is* and *has* for the manifestation of the one Divine Life, so long as there is the least tinge of *rasa* or flavour and taste for conscious separated existence, so long must the meaning of the true Psychology

of Negation, with which the *Guru* plays on the purified heart of the disciple,—the voiceless instruction—remain a sealed book; and all the advancement of knowledge, and occult experiments in discovering the genesis of atoms, remain absolutely futile and worthless, so far as the language of the Self is concerned. We should therefore try to re-assimilate the concepts of Theosophy in the light of the unity of the Self, with the help of the Psychology of Negation, the psychology which seeks to reduce everything of the finite and the conditioned into the One Self, through whose radiance everything shines, and whose language everything in the phenomenal world, individually, collectively, and synthetically speaks and indicates.

तमेव भाक्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भाषा सर्वमिदम् विभाति ।

“He shining, all this shines,  
His light illumines all this.”

DREAMER.

“When you rise in the morning, form a resolution to make the day a happy one to a fellow-creature. It is easily done; a left-off garment to the man who needs it, a kind word to the sorrowful, an encouraging expression to the striving—trifles in themselves light as air—will do it at least for the twenty-four hours. By the most simple arithmetical sum look at the result. If you send one person, only one, happily through each day, that is 365 in the year. And if you live 40 years only after you commence that course of medicine, you have made 14,600 beings happy, at all events, for a time.”—(*Sidney Smith*).

## COGITATIONS OF A STUDENT OF THEOSOPHY.

( *Concluded from p. 133.* )

As this will be the last issue of the *Pilgrim*, it becomes necessary to bring this series of humble Cogitations to a premature close—premature, because only the first and in a positive sense the lesser portion of the original plan can be carried out, at present. But since this portion of the whole scheme has at least included a good deal of the all-important work of clearing the foundations, it may perhaps not have been altogether useless.

That it has been mainly negative in its outcome, so far, was an inevitable consequence of the purely intellectual standpoint from which we set out. With our present exceedingly limited and fragmentary knowledge on the subjects that have been under consideration; with the limitations further imposed by a purely intellectual standpoint; with the limited space available, and confronted with the inextricable tangle and confusion of contradictory statements and assertions, from various sides, put forward with equally emphatic claims to genuine and reliable firsthand *knowledge* drawn from actual experience and observation—in the face of all this, it was inevitable from the outset that we should in the main find ourselves driven to conclusions either negative altogether, or at best rather vaguely tentative.

One cannot but feel, however, that such an outcome must needs be sadly disappointing to the more enthusiastic spirits who have had the patience to follow this series of papers. And now that they come to a rather abrupt termination, it seems necessary to add, as a sort of postscript, a few pages

thought and written from a less restricted point of view. For, as has been more than hinted on previous occasions, however important the intellect may be, it by no means exhausts the whole content of "Man," nor includes more than a part of that complex nature which is his.

Indeed, while I cannot agree with Bergson and his followers that our intellect has been evolved purely and solely as an adaptation to the *practical* needs of *material* life, or that its usefulness and purpose are exhausted in its relation to action, I am inclined to think that there is sufficient substance in this view to give us pause before we proceed to assign to the intellect that somewhat exclusive pre-eminence and over-ruling predominance as against feeling and willing—the other main factors in the triple strand of human nature—which have been claimed for it by so many thinkers and writers in the past.

It is true that during the last twenty years, these factors, feeling and willing, have been gaining an ever-increasing measure of recognition and relative importance in the whole of experience; but I believe that we are still far removed from fully appreciating their significance, more especially the bearing and meaning of their implications for the adequate interpretation and philosophical re-thinking of experience as a whole. These implications and their significance it had been my intention to explore, at least superficially, in subsequent papers, in the belief that the results would afford firm and solid ground for important conclusions and inferences, of vital importance for our whole view of existence, no less than for our attitude towards life. But that project cannot now be carried out, and I can only hope that abler heads and more convincing pens than mine will some day carry through the undertaking. For I believe that adequate investigation along these lines will eventually lead to the establishment of the foundations of philosophy

upon an unshakable basis of verified and verifiable experience, thus permitting the erection of a solid, durable, and comprehensive structure, which will grow, as science expands, from generation to generation.

Such broad generalities as these, however, can have little significance save for those who are familiar with the present trend and revival of philosophical interest and enquiry. It is unfortunately impossible, in this brief concluding paper, even to sketch in outline the lines of thought to which they lead ; or to indicate, with any hope of being intelligible, the reasons and grounds for anticipating a rich harvest of results in the not too distant future. It must suffice to point to the road, and then content ourselves with very briefly stating some of the more fundamental and essential among the general conclusions to which I think that road will most probably lead. Some of these will be strictly philosophical, some scientific, some religious, while some probably will belong to the debatable lands bordering these various provinces. But I shall not attempt any classification, or indeed any planned order of statement, for this could only be misleading. I shall simply advance certain opinions, formulate certain thoughts, as they come to me.

In one of the earlier papers in this series, I showed briefly that the present revival of interest in, and effort towards, a constructive philosophy could not fail to result in the definite establishment of philosophy on a *spiritual* basis—that is, one from which the Universe is regarded as throughout *psychical* in nature, and as having its roots in a Ground of the same essential nature as that which becomes *conscious content* in our own experience—leaving over no irreducible surd such as “dead” non-psychical “matter” or other extraneous phantom of abstraction, to haunt our minds. It will be a philosophy of experience, the fundamental outlines of which will be given by the implications involved in the structure of our experience

as known ; but all three aspects of that experience, Intellect, Feeling, and Will, must receive each its due weight and importance, alike contributing each its own share to the foundations of the whole.

One certain result of this more complete analysis must, I think, be that the individual will receive the due meed of recognition which hitherto has been denied him in systematic philosophising. For, being a philosophy of experience, it cannot ignore the obvious fact that, so far as our *direct* knowledge and experience go, all experience is essentially experience of the *individual*.

All our talk about experience other than individual is either purely imaginary or at best inferential, we actually and directly *know* only *individual* experience ; other types and forms, such as, for instance, the collective experience of nations and communities, may be realities indeed, but their nature and reality requires proof. It is not primarily and directly given.

Hence neither the absolutist mode of envisaging the Universe, when the individual disappears and vanishes in a thin imaginary Absolute, as reconciler of all contradictions and evils, nor the materialistic, the mechanistic and the energetic systems, which also regard the individual as a mere vanishing and wholly evanescent phenomenon, will be able to maintain themselves.

Thus one of the basic and vitally important tasks of the immediate future, will be the formulation of a conception of the individual adequate to the needs of a true philosophy of experience. And this will involve a large amount of empirical research, along the lines both of normal and of abnormal psychology—a research of which only the barest beginnings have been attempted.

This problem of the individual is one of the most difficult, and also one of the most vitally important for the entire

philosophical development of the future. It may therefore be interesting to consider very briefly a few leading points in connection with it.

As just remarked, the only type of experience we actually know anything about is individual experience ; and if the conception of evolution is valid at all, it follows that in some way or other the individual must be regarded as evolving, as the centre and focus of the whole evolutionary process. How we shall conceive the individual to meet this demand is a problem we cannot consider now ; but as regards the human individual—the only one we are directly acquainted with—it seems probable at least that he must be regarded as a permanent, but changing and evolving “centre”, psychic through and through, of course, but not necessarily self-conscious in all phases. This individual centre, if it is to be permanent and evolving amidst change, must clearly be in so far independent of the physical organism that it can persist and function after that organism has disintegrated and apart from it. But when thus separated from the organism, the nature of its conditioning and experiences, whether clearly or vaguely conscious, dimly “aware” only, or even wholly below the levels of our present conscious experience, are matters which can only be decided by research and experiment.

It seems probable, *a priori*, from general considerations, as well as in the light of the conception of evolution, that the individual centre slowly grows and evolves through repeated and periodic manifestations in conjunction with a series of organisms—by reincarnation, in short. But it seems to me very questionable whether *any* either of the theories or the descriptions that have been offered as to the nature and laws of this process are even approximately correct.

It is true that there exists a certain amount of not very well investigated evidence of the occurrence of *actual memory*



of a previous earth-life in the case of children, as well as the more pretentious claims of those who figure as seers. As far as it goes, all this supports the broad general idea of reincarnation; but it throws little light on the many problems involved in the theory: one of the most difficult of which seems to me to lie in the question as to the nature of the consciousness, or awareness, *properly* belonging to the individual centre *apart from the physical organism*. For of this we at present know nothing—all our experience is of the resultant consciousness displayed in the conjunction of such a centre with a waking physical organism; and that helps us but little even through inference. And I am afraid that even the utmost stretching of philosophical reasoning will not take us far: the only road I can see being that of laborious, prolonged, and strictly scientific investigation and experiment. One can only hope that the present century may witness advances as remarkable and discoveries as illuminating in this direction, as the last did in other fields of research.

But though we have no memory of past existences, this is merely a negative instance, and one which we ought to expect in view of the general conditions involved, and particularly because the individual centre, which alone can be the bearer of such memories, is itself inaccessible to our investigations, and can manifest its content only by means of, and in conjunction with, an entirely new and fresh organism.

It is this combination of the perdurable individual centre with a physical organism—*plus* whatever further intermediate links may intervene between them—which renders these investigations so difficult and obscure. For it must not be forgotten that the so-called “physical” organism *is itself fundamentally psychic*—that is, of the same *ultimate* nature and origin as the conscious content of our own experience—though almost certainly it belongs to a level far, far below

that on which obtains fully conscious content such as ours.

Even the experiences of the great mystics proper do not help us much here, for their attention and interest have ordinarily—especially in the West—been focussed in a different direction. Hence there is very little indeed which one can venture to assert with much confidence at present, in regard to the individual centre. It must be perdurable, surviving the destruction of the body, storing up the results of experience, growing and evolving ever. Its evolution—in the human stage anyhow—seems most probably carried out by means of successive lives on earth; and it is certainly the focus and centre of evolutionary activity, in nature dynamic and psychic through and through.

But it seems very doubtful whether, in the average man at least, the centre is “self-conscious” as such, or apart from the waking organism, or even whether it possesses such measure of *clear* awareness as we should be able to recognise as resembling our own or that of the higher animals. Since it is an *evolving* centre, the stages of clear awareness and self-consciousness (apart from conjunction with any organism) must, one would think, be reached sooner or later. But whether that stage is marked by what we call “genius” or not, when and where it comes in the scale of growth, whether gradually or suddenly, and what are its conditions—on all these questions it seems at present impossible even to form an opinion supported by reliable facts. But this much is obvious. At the present level of human evolution, among all the thousands of millions of living humanity, there are at most only a few scattered units living at any time, in whom the individual centre is sufficiently evolved in power and consciousness to bring its own content and memories through into the clear light of waking self-consciousness, against the roaring tumult of the living organism with which it is conjoined.

With regard to the condition of the individual centre after separation from the physical organism by the death of the latter, one can only advance a few very general remarks with any measure of confidence. For the detailed accounts of these *postmortem* conditions and experiences which those who claim seership, whether spiritualistic, theosophical or other, have given us, do not seem to me deserving of much confidence, since they are usually mutually contradictory, and the claims to seership on which they rest are quite unsupported by anything more solid than blatant assertions.

But some general considerations may at least be offered.

Death certainly removes the roar and tumult of the organic life of the body; and if there are other intermediate sheaths linking the centre to the organism, these also are probably shed one by one. In that case we should expect to find a progressive modification in the character and also the content of consciousness, in proportion as the centre becomes more and more disentangled from its associated sheaths. But beyond this very general statement, I do not think we have reliable evidence enough to enable us to go. Nor are we in a position to form a correct idea of the nature or the character of the centre itself when finally freed from the sheaths that linked it to the physical body. Such knowledge may be ultimately attainable; but only as the result of prolonged investigation. At present we are certainly very far removed from such a result. It would, however, seem at least probable that the level of consciousness, and more particularly of self-consciousness, proper to the centre itself, will be found to depend upon its stage of evolution in the general scale of humanity.

Intimately connected with these problems are the broader philosophical problems of Identity in change, of the conceptions of Individuality and Personality. The first is far too difficult and complex to be more than mentioned here; even

the second and third are beyond our limits, save for the briefest mention.

The old theosophical distinction between Personality and Individuality may perhaps be appropriately recalled now. According to that view the Personality was the self-consciousness associated with the experience content of one single life, the current one, on earth ; while the Individuality was regarded as self-consciousness and memory associated with and embracing the experience content of a number of earth-lives, or successive Personalities. These conceptions were undoubtedly very useful in those early days ; but I need hardly say that they are not accepted or even current in ordinary philosophical thinking.

Indeed present philosophical terminology tends rather to invert the relation above described and to regard Personality as higher and more complete than Individuality, inasmuch as the former is taken to connote self-consciousness, while the latter is regarded as not necessarily carrying that implication. From a broad point of view this view is probably the more correct ; since we speak of an individual wasp, bee, ant, or other lower animal, to which we certainly do not ascribe self-consciousness at all. If we adopt this view, then the term individuality will still have the wider meaning, since all persons are certainly individuals, though all individuals are not self-conscious personalities. Hence, therefore, Personality means simply an individual possessed of self-consciousness.

Thus the phrase "individual centre," which I have used above, would be correct, since the centre either may, or may not, be associated with self-consciousness. In the case of the normal waking human being, it is undoubtedly so associated ; but to what extent that remains the case during sleep, after death, or in abnormal psychic states, we cannot say with any certainty.

To some extent these very general and rather vague conclusions will probably be supplemented and enlarged hereafter from the ethical and emotional sides of human experience. But it would be entirely premature to attempt anything of the kind at present. For the validity and significance of such inferences depends so largely upon the general philosophical scheme adopted, that, until the outline at least of such a scheme has been worked out and its foundations verified, their value must remain problematical. Just as purely intellectual considerations alone have been shown by long experience to be inadequate to afford a sound basis for philosophy, so too it seems to me that neither ethical nor emotional considerations taken in isolation from other aspects of experience can be relied upon as safe guides. And therefore our conclusions must remain vague and general until a vast amount of further spadework has been done.

Personally I must admit that this prospect is dreary and disappointing enough to those of eager soul, though it is and has been the constant experience of all those who have laboured in the field of the special sciences. But, on the other hand, it is just in the domain of those special sciences that men find their feet most firmly set on the ladder of verifiable knowledge—of knowledge which is ever growing both in extent and in depth. This certainty, however, is undoubtedly bought at a price, the price of the loyal and continued labours of generation after generation of devoted minds and hearts, each of whom individually may have but slender results to show for his life's toil.

Is there, then, no short cut to the TRUTH—with large capitals? Is there no quicker path for the eager heart and mind than along the slowly growing road to be hewn out by the toil of untold generations yet to come?

Some of us believed so, and set our lives on the hazard. With what result?

Study the records, such as have come down to us, left by the really great mystics of all ages and peoples, and what do we find? Most of those whose records we possess were, in the narrower sense, religious mystics; that is, they clung to and devoutly believed in some *one* definite dogmatic system, either purely religious or religio-philosophical. Inevitably their minds and utterances were coloured by the system each one belonged to, as well as by their racial and national environment. Hence each differs from the other, not only in details, but in fundamental matters also. They agree, it is true, in their general attitude; in their teaching as to the mystic path itself, even in detail; in their optimistic interpretation of the universe; in their conviction that in man there dwells a spark of the eternal, capable of limitless development and destined to a godlike future. But all these again are very general conclusions, even more vague than those we have just been considering. When it comes to the more specific problems, such as those indicated above, one finds difference and disagreement, instead of unanimity and concordance. At the end of our study we are left pretty much where we were, except for some valuable confirmation of our purely general conclusions.

But—it may rightly be urged—the great mystics themselves speak with no uncertain sound, and all proclaim their unshakable conviction that “all is well,” and that they, each in his own way, have attained to the supreme goal of human life. Nor would I question for a moment the truth and validity of these statements—for *each individual mystic so far as he himself is concerned*. But *our* problem is a wider one; for to-day the demand is for truth that is *verifiable for all*; for that and nothing less is the true Theosophy. In that respect our harvest is still scanty, fragmentary and restricted; for modern so-called Theosophy has developed just the same internal contradictions and inconsistencies as have other analogous attempts.

As regards the individual seeker, blessed indeed is he, if to him be given those divine gifts of complete, wholly absorbed Love and Faith *in some one system or religion*, which, thus concentrated and focussed, have led the great mystics of the past to their far-off goal. But there are many to-day to whom this is impossible, and for such the landscape is indeed misty and vague. They must live and work in a vagueness of faith, trying and difficult beyond the understanding of those who do not experience it. And it is especially for such as these that sympathy and understanding are most called for from those who have passed out of the mists into the light of clear knowledge—if such there be in the world of men.

Let, then, all who can hope on and work, that the slowly growing road of knowledge may advance, and that those who come after may find perchance a firmer foothold than those who cast their lives to the hazard in the early days of the Theosophical movement.

S. T.

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### STRAY NOTES.

In this issue we have to bid farewell to our readers. In the February number certain causes were indicated which led the Council to decide to discontinue the publication, the main ones being the very small number of subscribers and the consequent financial loss. In spite of this, a minority of the members of the Council were in favour of continuing the journal for one more year. But there was a further difficulty; namely, that, if it was to continue, some other arrangement would have to be made for the editing, as the present editors, owing to the press of other imperative duties, were unable to continue the work. No one else, however, could be found who was both able and willing to take it up, and, in view of this fact, the whole Council agreed that there was practically no alternative but to cease publishing. Possibly it may be found practicable to issue articles from time to time



in the form of pamphlets, which would to some extent supply the place of the *Pilgrim*. But whether this is done or not will depend on the amount of interest shown in the near future in the League and its work. In the meantime we must, however regretfully, part from our readers, with the hope that every succeeding year may see us all farther along the path which leads to the one goal of all true spiritual effort, the knowledge and realisation of the Divine.

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We would call the special attention of our readers to the article on page 271, on the Pursuit of Mystic Research. There seems to be a strong tendency now-a-days to emphasise the practical application of Theosophical principles. Many subsidiary activities have gradually grown up around and within the Theosophical Society, and much energy is flowing in the channels thus created. This is not in itself at all a matter for regret ; rather we should welcome all sincere and well-advised attempts to translate theory and principle into practice. But we must not therefore overlook or ignore the theoretical side ; its pursuit and study should form the basis, or the background, of all activity ; from it should come the inspiration, the impelling motive, of the active side. We are all familiar with the ancient teaching, that in man we see the universe reflected in miniature ; and we may apply this principle and its converse here with the necessary modifications. As in the consciousness of the individual there are the three aspects of thinking, feeling, and willing or acting, so are there similar aspects in the life of an organisation. The study of mysticism will do much towards the training and exercise of the thinking and feeling aspects ; and would therefore seem to be specially needed at the present time. Moreover, if pursued in the right spirit, it should lead us nearer to the reality, to the heart of all being, thus supplying not only the needed balance and guidance, but also the inspiring motive of action. There is probably no country whose whole atmosphere is so suited for this study as India, nor in which it has always formed so important, and even essential, a part of the life of the nation, even though to-day the prominence given to social and political changes may to some extent have thrust it into the background. We hope, therefore, that some centres and groups may be formed here to co-operate with our brothers and sisters in New Zealand. The members of the League include some of the oldest members of the Theosophical Society, who naturally know and appreciate H. P. Blavatsky's great



work, *The Secret Doctrine*, better than many of the present-day members of the T. S.; and these are likely to be specially attracted by this line of study. If any of our readers, then, whether members of the League or not, feel inclined to form such a group, or if any wish to take up the study individually, will they be good enough to communicate either with the Joint General Secretary of the I. T. League, Kamacha, Benares City, or else directly with Mr. S. Stuart, 18 London Street, Ponsonby, Auckland, New Zealand, who is the moving spirit in this work.

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The following extract from a sermon by the Rev. R. J. Campbell (printed in the *Christian Commonwealth*) will probably awaken a responsive chord in the hearts of many of our readers, and may form a fitting close to our little journal:—

The mystic touch of Nature, like a magician's wand, arouses in us feelings for which we have no name, effects a certain heightening of our self-awareness; for the time being there is *more of us* while we are under her spell than normally; and I bid you mark that that *more* is a better 'more' than the ordinary self we know so well and yet fail to know; it is a true spirituality that emerges when the cosmic force sweeps through us and flings wide the doors of the soul. But mark also that you never feel alone in any such moments—never. The effect of any great emotion never is to make us feel isolated in the universe. Over and over again I have observed this strange fact, that the more we feel the presence of the great immensities and awful sublimities of life, the more there presses upon us the knowledge that we are companioned by a higher than ourselves. Any emotion that carries us right up out of and above our ordinary levels does but thrust us more and more upon the experience of being met and gripped and held by that which speaks through consciousness, but immeasurably transcends it. I repeat that if you will only interrogate your own heart, you will find that I speak the truth. No tremendous exaltation of spirit you have ever known, whether in touch with nature or otherwise, has made you feel more alone. It does just the opposite: in some strange, unexplainable way it seems to unite you on a higher plane with all that has ever lived or shall live: it gathers you into the whole. Never tell me then that you know nothing about God: this is God, this background of the soul, this sweet but awful power that flames up within us, wooingly gentle, infinitely tender, and graciously intimate, yet majestic, glorious, all-subduing, when the hour of vision is granted to our poor, darkened minds. God silent, inscrutable? Why, in everything that constitutes man man, in contrast with that which is only of the brute and the clay, God's voice is ever sounding.....God silent, God inscrutable? Man, there is nothing in life worth living for, nothing that enlarges the narrow boundary of consciousness nothing that lifts the soul to power, that does not make us feel the presence of the infinite, and the glory of the life eternal."









